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LETTER AND SPIRIT

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

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Letter and Spirit.

NOTES

ON THE

COMMANDMENTS.

BY

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI,

AUTHOR OF "SEEK AND FIND," AND "CALLED TO BE SAINTS."

"What is written in the law? how readest thou?
. . . . This do, and thou shalt live."—*St. Luke* x. 26, 28.

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TO

My Mother

IN THANKFULNESS FOR HER

DEAR AND HONOURED

EXAMPLE.

Letter and Spirit.

St. Mark xii. 28–30: St. Matthew xxii. 39, 40: Exodus xx. 3–17.

And one of the Scribes . . . . asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is,

Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the Law.

Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.

Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt do no murder.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

will not hold him guiltless, that taketh His Name in vain.

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy manservant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

"HEAR, O Israel; The Lord our God is One Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

This First, "the Great," Commandment is characterised by unity. Whatever else we find in it, this is one of its essential features, if not its leading feature. And, in fact, within this unity is bound up the entire multitude of our duties; out of this one supreme commandment have to be developed all the details of every one of our unnumbered obligations.

"Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is One Lord." While "the Christian verity" declares to us the Mystery of the All-Holy Trinity, "the Catholic religion" asserts the inviolable Unity of the Godhead [Athanasian Creed]. And touching these two Mysteries, it seems that to grasp, hold fast, adore the Catholic Mystery leads up to man's obligation to grasp, hold fast, adore the Christian Mystery; rather than this to the other. What is Catholic underlies

what is Christian: on the Catholic basis alone can the Christian structure be raised; even while to raise that superstructure on that foundation is the bounden duty of every soul within reach of the full Divine Revelation. In God's inscrutable Providence it has pleased Him that millions of the human race should live in unavoidable ignorance of Christian doctrine: to that fundamental doctrine of God's Unity, from which the other is developed, He has graciously vouchsafed a freer currency; so that while the Jewish Church knew it by revelation, multitudes of the Gentile world knew or at least surmised it by intellectual or spiritual enlightenment. Let us thank God that this main point of knowledge we hold in common with so vast a number of our dear human brothers and sisters, children along with ourselves of the all-loving Father; let us thank Him through Jesus Christ that we Christians are instructed how thus acceptably to thank Him; let us beseech Him in that all-prevailing Name to add to each of us, whatsoever we be, every lacking gift and grace.

Whilst Unity appears the sole existence essential to be conceived, our conceiving it as separate from ourself attests at once our likeness and our unlikeness to it. That which we conceive is on our own showing other than ourselves who conceive it: yet to conceive that which has no existence is (I reverently assume) the exclusive attribute of Almighty God, Who out of nothing created all things. To modify by a boundless licence of imagination the Voice of Revelation, or of tradition, or our own perceptions, concerning the universe, its Ruler, inhabitants, features, origin, destinies, falls within the range of human faculties. And thus may not light be thrown on that mass of bewildering error (whose name is legion) which at every turn meeting us as man's invention, is after all a more or less close travestie of truth? So like in detail, so unlike as a whole, to the truth it simulates, that alternately we incline to ask: If so much is known without immediate revelation, wherefore reveal? If truth pervades such errors, if such errors can be grafted upon

truth, is truth itself distinguishable, or is it worth distinguishing?

At first sight and apparently the easiest of all conceptions to realise, I yet suppose that there may in the long run be no conception more difficult for ourselves to clench and retain than this of absolute Unity; this Oneness at all times, in all connexions, for all purposes. Even if we consider Attributes, they seem to clash: while if we ascend to contemplate the Trinity in Unity, Three Persons, One God, immediately we must confer not with flesh and blood, but walk by faith in lieu of sight. Opposite errors invite us; and well will it be for us if trembling between them our magnet yet points aright: if while not tampering with the Unity, and while fully persuaded that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are Three distinct Persons in the One Only Godhead, we yet set Them not practically one against another, producing in our vain imaginations a "Trinity in dis-Unity."

Nor is it possible that either error should, so to say, lie fallow: each cannot but bear its

legitimate poison-crop. But for the Ever Blessed Trinity man might seem to stand aloof from the sympathy of his Maker: absolute Oneness may, but could *exclusive* Oneness have any fellow-feeling with such as we are? an ever-renewed multitude who stray like sheep and need a shepherd, who die away like foliage and need renewal, who from evening to morning are made an end of yet not done with. On the other hand, to view in fact even if not avowedly the Three Persons as Three Gods leads towards arraying them in opposition to each other: till we feel towards the Divine Son as if He alone was our Friend, the Divine Father being our foe; as if Christ had not only to rescue us from the righteous wrath of His Father, but to shelter us from His enmity.

A self-surrendering awe-struck reverence is all that beseems us in contemplating this Mystery of Mysteries, the Trinity in Unity. Yet, perhaps, we may not unlawfully ponder whether, could the Divine Unity have existed as (so to say) an unmodified Oneness, whether such a

God would (I say not could) have created this multitudinous ever-multiplying creation. For if (as I have seen pointed out) God is not to be called like His creature, whose grace is simply typical, but that creature is like Him because expressive of His archetypal Attribute, it suggests itself that for every aspect of creation there must exist the corresponding Divine Archetype.

Nor surely is it without a practical aim that we seek (not to explain, but) to define to ourselves that only Lord God in Whom we believe. "The Lord our God is one Lord:" and every ignorance which has its origin in our own sins or negligences becomes itself a sin against Him Who has declared Himself to be "a Jealous God," One Who will not give His glory to another (Is. xlii. 8); One Whom we Christians are privileged, and are therefore bound, to know and to adore as He is and by no means as He is not.

And even as our God is One, so does He summon us to become one in His service. The powers and passions of our complex nature

must be concentrated in one only love of Him alone: His many gifts to us must be returned to Him in one self-exhaustive gift of all we are and all we have.

To the Jewish Church the Commandments were, in point of time, first Ten (Ex. xx. 1–17), subsequently Two (Deut. vi. 4, 5; Lev. xix. 18): if, that is, we may adhere to the order in which they appear registered in the Pentateuch. To the Christian Church they are, in virtue of our Lord's authoritative summary, first Two; from which Two "all the Law" has to be developed (St. Matt. xxii. 34–40). The Law therefore appears under the similitude of a numerous offspring of the Two united and indivisible Commandments; which two, while of equal obligation, are nevertheless of unequal dignity; the First is the head, source, root; the Second, made after its likeness, derives from it authority and honour. Even could the Second be abolished, the First would remain: yet to fulfil that Second is man's only mode of making sure that he observes the First, nor can these two which God has joined

together be put practically asunder. "We love Him, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 St. John iv. 19–21).

The First Great Commandment, including that Second which is its like, necessarily includes the entire Decalogue: while of the Decalogue the first four Commandments, being traceable to the First but not to the Second, become characteristically *the* substance of that First Commandment.

And being four in number, these commandments naturally range themselves (though not in exactly corresponding order) under those four powers of man (heart, soul, mind, strength), which are summoned to fulfil the Great Commandment. God claims our whole selves, all we are, all we have, all we may become; and doubtless the all-important feature of the Great

Commandment is that we must keep back nothing: still, it may in fact help us to keep back nothing if, so to say, we sift and sort our resources; and offer not simply *all* as a whole, but *each* one by one.

Yet before we descend to classification, it is necessary to make sure that we do without evasion or abatement offer all and keep back nothing. A Jew, quoting the letter of the Decalogue, might plead that the point of his First Commandment was to "have none other gods but" the One true God. Not so a Christian, nourished "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." To him—to us, the point of our First Commandment is that all we are, and all we have, must be not merely withheld from false gods, but devoted to the true God.

Of this, as of all its dependent excellences, we find but one perfect example, our Lord Jesus Christ. Of its contrary we find specimens on every hand and in endless variety.

Adam and Eve illustrate two sorts of defec-

tion (1 Tim. ii. 14). Eve made a mistake, "being *deceived*" she was in the transgression: Adam made no mistake: his was an error of will, hers partly of judgment; nevertheless both proved fatal. Eve, equally with Adam, was created sinless: each had a specially vulnerable point, but this apparently not the same point. It is in no degree at variance with the Sacred Record to picture to ourselves Eve, that first and typical woman, as indulging quite innocently sundry refined tastes and aspirations, a castle-building spirit (if so it may be called), a feminine boldness and directness of aim combined with a no less feminine guessiness as to means. Her very virtues may have opened the door to temptation. By birthright gracious and accessible, she lends an ear to all petitions from all petitioners. She desires to instruct ignorance, to rectify misapprehension: "unto the pure all things are pure," and she never suspects even the serpent. Possibly a trace of blameless infirmity transpires in the wording of her answer, "*lest* ye die," for God had said to the man

". . . in the day that thou eatest thereof thou *shalt surely* die:" but such tenderness of spirit seems even lovely in the great first mother of mankind; or it may be that Adam had modified the form, if it devolved on him to declare the tremendous fact to his second self. Adam and Eve reached their goal, the Fall, by different routes. With Eve the serpent discussed a question of conduct, and talked her over to his own side: with Adam, so far as appears, he might have argued the point for ever and gained no vantage; but already he had secured an ally weightier than a score of arguments. Eve may not have argued at all: she offered Adam a share of her own good fortune, and having hold of her husband's heart, turned it in her hand as the rivers of water. Eve preferred various prospects to God's Will: Adam seems to have preferred one person to God: Eve diverted her "mind" and Adam his "heart" from God Almighty. Both courses led to one common result, that is, to one common ruin (Gen. iii.).

Whatever else may be deduced from the

opening chapters of Genesis, their injunction of obedience is plainly written; of unqualified obedience, of obedience on pain of death.

To do anything whatsoever, even to serve God, "with all the strength," brings us into continual collision with that modern civilized standard of good breeding and good taste which bids us avoid extremes. Such modern standard may be regarded as having by ancient anticipation brought King Saul into collision with the Prophet Samuel in the matter of Amalek and especially of Agag (1 Sam. xv. 1–33). Saul stood far in advance of many a conqueror when he abhorred destruction for the mere sake of destruction; he seemed to enlist both piety and prudence on his own side by proposing to utilize the condemned cattle. It may have evinced a mind suavely cosmopolitan, possibly even some far-sighted appreciation of the balance of power, when he spared Agag. On the other hand, the letter of the standing law (Ex. xvii. 14–16) and the word of the immediate commandment were explicitly in favour of extermination; and Samuel,

God's mouthpiece, saw no room for two opinions as to whether the Lord meant what He had plainly said. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice;" summed up his simple view of the crisis: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." (*See also* 1 Kings xx. 28–42 for a somewhat similar incident in the career of Ahab.) Saul, alas! choice and goodly as he was, does in this perilous matter of slack service act as a warning beacon at more than one turning point of his course. Towards the commencement of his reign, and under the first prolonged strain of danger, his courage held out during seven days, but failing at the last moment undermined his throne (1 Sam. xiii. 8–14). His zeal somewhile extirpated witches and wizards, till at length at a desperate pass he himself had recourse to one woman with a familiar spirit, and heard his own and his sons' death-doom pronounced (1 Sam. xxviii. 3–20). He fought in person his last battle against the enemies of Israel, yet after all died as a fool dieth (1 Sam. xxxi. 1–6).

If we may accept Adam, Eve, Saul, as illustrating defective heart, mind, strength, in loyalty to Almighty God, we seem still in search of a representative of defective "soul." But here reaching (so to say) the very throne of man's free-will service, the noblest element of his noble nature, we observe how soul-defection being the root of every defection, and in itself including all defection, expresses itself in each breach of any commandment, be that breach one of commission or of omission, yet is not itself to be expressed in any separate form: it prompts, it pervades, it incurs the guilt of every transgression; nevertheless to us creatures of sense it becomes perceptible not otherwise than through effects wrought by means of agents, —as indeed, as regards our own faculties, is the case with all causes, even with our God Himself.

Once more, then, we find ourselves at the outset of our essay. We epitomize the First and Great Commandment in the clause, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

thy soul," and because with all the soul, therefore with that undivided and entire self, through whose multitudinous powers as through a many-stringed instrument the soul attains to expression. With this intangible "soul" of our obedience seems closely to correspond the intangible "duty" of the First Commandment of the Decalogue.

"Thou shalt have none other gods but Me." Comparing this with the Second Commandment ("Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," &c.), it appears that the distinction between these two laws corresponds with the distinction between motives and conduct.

The First Commandment is wholly spiritual: its negative form sweeping away all else sets man alone to adore God alone. In fulfilment of this solitary primitive duty man contemplates God as God, before Whose passionless Perfection he strips himself of passions: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee" (Ps. lxxiii. 25).

He centres his affections on God: on Christ indeed, yet not on Christ, except as Very God, Who hath taken up the Manhood into God (Athanasian Creed), and he is ready jealously to echo the apostolic declaration: "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more" (2 Cor. v. 16), —wherefore? in order, as we read elsewhere: "That God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28). In contemplating the Divine Perfections, he rests satisfied with nothing short of the "full persuasion" St. Paul inculcates in a minor matter (*see* Rom. xiv. 5), and which if he cannot realize intellectually, he can and does act upon unhesitatingly. The Judge of all the earth will do right; therefore (says he) though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him (*see* Gen. xviii. 25; Job xiii. 15). He goes further: and in will with Abraham relinquishes not himself merely, but his best beloved also; believing meanwhile the promise that he shall receive a hundredfold, nevertheless obeying not as believing the promise but as revering the command. Equally

persuaded that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do, naked and open he sets himself before Him, and comes unflinchingly to the light, that at all costs his deeds may be made manifest (Eph. v. 13), too thankful if thus while he "doeth truth" they are made manifest as wrought in God (St. John iii. 21). In perplexity he falls back on Ezekiel's exhaustive answer, "O Lord God, Thou knowest." In self-scrutiny he prays with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." At his highest moments he protests with St. Peter, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." At all times he is ready to send his heart heavenwards with St. John, beseeching "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." By him the Divine law is felt as "the perfect law of liberty," because transgression has become not heinous merely but monstrous: and he silences temptation, saying with Joseph, "How then can I do

this great wickedness, and sin against God?" or again with the Three Children, "I am not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be *so*, my God is able to deliver me, and He will deliver me. If *not*, I will not serve thy gods." Thus does he seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and taking no thought for the morrow, leaves the morrow to take thought for the things of itself.

It seems to ensue that an infringement exclusively of the First Commandment (if such an exclusive infringement be possible to one of man's compound nature), cannot be discernible except by God Omniscient, and possibly by the individual culprit. Though the light within him have become darkness, his radiance may long continue to shine before men; even as a star extinct for a thousand years past, may still when gazed at from earth appear luminous.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. iii. 12). "The heart

is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart" (Jer. xvii. 9, 10). Except the Lord search our hearts with us vain will be our own taking heed: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. cxxvii. 1). Nevertheless "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts" (Prov. xx. 27); and as long as we keep *this* candle choked by worldliness, or imbedded in sloth (St. Mark iv. 21, 22), vain must it be for us to await miraculous illumination; the harvest will pass, the summer end, and we shall not be saved.

The exceeding difficulty of laying a finger (so to say) on any distinct breach specially of the First Commandment sends us perforce to sift motives, gauge tendencies, test not conduct directly, but the standard which regulates conduct. Even virtues must be mistrusted; their root as well as their shoot must be examined, while nothing short of that mature fruit, whereby alone they "cheer God and man," can pass

muster as of final account. The First Commandment, being itself framed upon a negative, invites us to study negatives in our search after all perfection. Of these one may perhaps serve as a specimen of its class, as a clue whereby each of us for himself can track home others.

DISINCLINATION may never go such lengths as to make us purposely omit a single duty, yet may it colour and dwarf our whole conception of duty. Far from breaking the box with Mary, we eke out our spikenard, and, unlike the Apostles, are more intent on rescuing the last fragments than on spreading the feast. All sorts of prudent precautions occur to us in studying Holy Scripture, and these land us occasionally in very eccentric latitudes; at least, so would persons say who merely look to the landmarks vouchsafed for our guidance. Sometimes our comment appears about as compatible with the text, as was that child's who pointed out the "niceness" of St. John Baptist's wild honey. Thus meditation on the Magi (St. Matt.

ii. 1–12) leads us not to any tangible offering, but to the still higher truth that,

> "Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
> Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor:"

a truth adapted to the devoted missionary bishop who penned the lines, but not so obviously to the run of men. Our study of Martha and Mary (St. Luke x. 38–42) assures us that the former was not wrong in the main, the latter setting an example to be followed cautiously because (we flatter ourselves) not applicable to all persons. Who has not seen the incident of the Young Ruler (St. Mark x. 17–27) utilized as a check to extravagant zeal? so far, that is, as a preliminary stress laid on what it does *not* enjoin can make it act as a sedative. It does not, we are assured, by any means require us to sell all; differences of rank, of position, of circumstances, are Providentially ordained, and are not lightly to be set aside; our duties lie within the decorous bounds of our station. The Young Ruler, indeed, was invited to sell all in spite of his great

possessions; therefore we must never suppose it impossible that that vague personage, "our neighbour," may be called upon to do so; we must not judge him in such a case, nay, we must view it not as his penalty but rather as his privilege: only we ourselves, who are bound by simple every-day duties, shall do well in all simplicity to perform them soberly, cheerfully, thankfully, not overstepping the limits of our vocation: wherefore let us give what we can afford; a pleasure or a luxury it may be well to sacrifice at the call of charity.

Yet is a caution against "righteousness overmuch" the gist of our Master's lesson? His recorded comment on the incident was "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" which He goes on to explain as they "that *trust* in riches." Is our most urgent temptation that which inclines us to do too much, or that which lulls us to do too little, or to do nothing? Is it so, that the bulk of professing Christians are likely to be dazzled by the splendid error of excessive "corban," and fairly

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to consume themselves by zeal? or are they not more likely so sedulously to count the cost as never to undertake building? It may be worst of all to put hand to plough and then look back: nevertheless it is no light evil so to gaze backwards as never to grasp the plough. When we detect ourselves calculating how little will clear us from breach of any commandment, and paring down our intention accordingly, we shall (I think) have grounds for searching deeper, lest already we be breaking the First Commandment.

A more intelligent sort of at least nominal disciples indulge Disinclination very differently. They tithe mint, cummin, everything; observing no less, although in a manner of their own, the weightier matters of the law; they provably do "these" after a fashion, neither do they leave undone "the other;" but all they do is done alike, "grudgingly and of necessity." Push their temper to its ultimate issue and they bid fair to become Balaams (Num. xxii.–xxiv.). That Prophet had (in a sense) no need to recognise the binding duty

of obedience, so imbued was he with a conviction of its inevitability; he "said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say anything? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." Nothing could be more apparently straightforward, more fair to all parties. Indeed, throughout his career (until his "last end" reveals his self-chosen position at that furthest point to which mortal eye can track him, Num. xxxi. 7, 8), his conduct is such that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to prove him in fault at any given moment. "The Lord refuseth to give me leave" may not be the best mode of expressing a Divine prohibition, but at any rate it is unequivocal. "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more," might not so much as raise a suspicion against him, but for subsequent events. His proposal midway on the downward path, "If it displease thee, I will get me back again," might have left us still in doubt but for the Angel's own words to which that was an answer, "Behold, I went out to withstand thee,

because thy way is perverse before me." While to the close of his fourfold prophecy his warning trumpet, even if reluctant, gives no uncertain sound.

Thank God, the ghastly fate of a renegade does not befall every one whose heart is not all along right in the sight of God; many repent and are forgiven, though for a while the "gall of bitterness" has poisoned their being, and turned their very prayer into sin. Neither Balaam's gifts nor his trial are likely ever to be ours; but sadly likely is it that we shall work with more or less of his ill will, unless we take heed to purify our hearts by love, as well as to cleanse our hands through fear; and not by a tepid love, but by a self-kindling, self-devouring love. "What lack I yet?" (St. Matt. xix. 20) were the very words of that gracious Young Ruler, who after all went away sorrowful. Nevertheless, the Gospel narrative leaves us in doubt as to the outcome of his sorrow: we may hope that he whom beholding "Jesus loved" may, although sorrowfully, still have relinquished all, taken up

his cross, and followed Him Who loved him. Tradition has combined into one personage this Young Ruler, Lazarus of Bethany (St. John xi. 1, 14, 44), the young man wrapped in a linen cloth (St. Mark xiv. 51, 52), and Lazarus the Beggar (St. Luke xvi. 19–25).

Balaam sets before us, in startling horror, the calculable issue of an indulged distaste for the Divine Will. Elsewhere we apprehend hints of the same sin and its penalty. Hand in hand with an Angel, Lot's wife started on the road to safety, but a backward look towards Sodom undid her (Gen. xix. 15, 16, 26). Moses raised difficulties in the way of obedience, till "the anger of the Lord was kindled against" him (Ex. iv. 10–14). Barak made terms with Deborah, and forthwith the terms of his Divine commission seem correspondingly to have changed: "I will deliver him into thine hand . . . The journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" (Judges iv. 6–9). Orpah, no less than Ruth and Naomi, set out for the land

of promise; but as they journeyed she kissed her mother-in-law and turned back (Ruth i. 6–15). So also in the New Testament; Herod was impressed by St. John Baptist, and Pilate by Christ Himself, and Felix by St. Paul; yet all three stopping short at the impression, lapsed from bad to worse (St. Mark vi. 20, 26, 27; St. John xviii. 33–40, xix. 1–16; Acts xxiv. 25–27).

Conscientious, and more especially scrupulous, persons seem characteristically open to this sin of Disinclination, even while they toil persistently along the narrow path; Disinclination makes them (so to say) graze the hedge on one side or other at every step; thorns catch them, stones half trip them up, a perpetual dust attends their footsteps, grace and comeliness of aspect vanish. Though they dare not shut themselves up comfortably indoors with the slothful man (Prov. xxii. 13), they are haunted by the "lion without," and dwell on the probability of his catching them at every corner. They observe the wind even while they sow,

and study the clouds while they reap; thus combining into one unseemly whole the discomforts of obedience and of disobedience.

The Bible records for our encouragement instances of persons who needed to overcome themselves in the first place: that done, their circumstances turned out favourable. Gideon had recourse to an offered omen before unsheathing the victorious "sword of the Lord, and of Gideon" (Judges vii. 9–25). Nehemiah nerved himself by prayer before risking a manifestation of sorrow in the King's presence, and thereby moving him to acts of grace (Neh. i. 3–11, ii. 1–8). Esther, trembling amid her fellow exiles, solemnized a three days' national fast before she faced her husband and won him to her will (Esther iv. 8–17, v. 1–3).

When all due weight has been conceded to secondary motives, the paramount motive for what we do or leave undone—if, that is, we aim at either acting or forbearing worthily—is love: not fear, or self-interest, or even hatred of sin, or sense of duty, but direct filial love to God.

Without this, they who shout for the battle and go forth one way will, in the end, flee five ways. Let us trace a parable in the adventure of a shepherd lost in a valley mist. No effort of his could beat that mist away: but by mounting a hill he rose above it, and discerned his path home. Our hill is communion with God. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ .... And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i. 3, ii. 6).

If we may thus consider the First Commandment of the Decalogue as forming the essence and basis of the "First and Great" Commandment, we may, I think, similarly view the Fifth as occupying the corresponding position in regard to the "Second and like" Commandment; and this, whether we insert the Fifth at the foot of the First table or at the head of the Second. St. Paul attests its dignity when by hope rather than by fear he commends its fulfilment to his

flock, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. vi. 1–3). Here, again, we find that the fundamental thing enjoined is a temper of mind, a disposition of heart; such excellence once secured, from this commandment as from its prototype, must inevitably be developed that self-restraint and varied active virtue which the ancillary laws of either Table specify or imply. The self-dedicated inner man of the heart, the devotion of the human spirit to the Father of spirits, is the one thing needful with which corresponds filial piety towards the parental character. Nevertheless, as the King's Daughter goes not home except environed by the Virgins that be her fellows; so may we rest assured that our own heart is not right either with God or with man, so long as inward loyalty fails to embody itself in outward observances.

Our "Lord God, merciful and gracious," has

been pleased to give honour unto the weaker vessel, appending the "first promise," not to the First Commandment, but to the Fifth. We are but dust, and this our day is the day of small things. Over and over again the lesson is brought home to us how tongues of angels and miracle-working faith are bestowed on some few, while of all without exception charity is required (1 Cor. xii. 27–31, xiii. 1–3); how to parade faith without works is a delusion and a snare (*see* St. James ii. 12–19); how in that day which shall make manifest every man's work of what sort it is, they who have slighted their fellow-men will discover that themselves are those who have irretrievably slighted Christ (St. Matt. xxv. 41–46). The Slothful Servant volunteers an estimate of the Divine character, but is instantly recalled to the simple practical point, "Thou knewest . . . thou oughtest therefore" (St. Matt. xxv. 24–30): intellectual feats, even spiritual recreations, even luxurious emotions and aspirations launched heavenwards, will not avail when once the Judgment is set and the Books are

opened. "Inasmuch as ye have done it . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not" explains and justifies the sentence.

Whilst all men so far represent God to us that to wrong them is to wrong Him, and to serve them is to serve Him; certain individuals in an exceptional sense and degree, either in person or by office, sometimes under both aspects, do beyond others represent Him to each of us, not as His substitutes, but as governors appointed of the Father, as powers ordained of God, which whoso resisteth resisteth the ordinance of God.

First of all, father and mother, to be held equally sacred, equally dear; who spend and are spent for their children before these can so much as love them in return. Their love outruns the letter of any law, except indeed it be the law of the Divine example. Under the Mosaic Dispensation a son's obstinate disobedience was punishable by death at his parents' demand (Deut. xxi. 18–21), but no instance of such a demand is recorded in the Bible; Eli

remonstrated with Hophni and Phinehas, but—alas for him and for them!—seems to have done nothing more stringent (1 Sam. ii. 22–25); David interceded with his captains, and this failing half broke his heart for Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 5, 32, 33, xix. 1–4). And it may be that Rebekah's sin, when she commanded and contrived Jacob's imposture, had no more envenomed root than an unscrupulous fondness and headstrong preference for him whom to her certain knowledge God was pleased to prefer; however this may have been, she later on paid the penalty of her error, not living to welcome her darling back from the prolonged exile into which her tardy fears had sent him (Gen. xxv. 21–23, xxvii. 6–17, 41–46).

Of filial duties the earliest in date is towards father and mother. Second in date, yet not secondary in dignity, devolves upon us the duty of obedience to spiritual superiors. And at the outset one contrast between the twain is noticeable. For a while the infant abides apparently incapable of fulfilling any obligations more ab-

struse than those to literal father and mother; his love and obedience towards them, his confidence and delight in them, are (if no more lies within his power) beyond a doubt adequate to fulfil the filial law incumbent upon him. His parents worthy of implicit obedience, love, honour, of small self-sacrifices and self-devotion, are the appointed recipients of such at his hands; we cannot tell whether he yet enjoys faculties to realize by means of them and beyond them any conception of the Supreme Father of all, though blessed words from Christ's most blessed lips open our eyes to such a hope: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven" (St. Matt. xviii. 10).

On the contrary, the child must have entered (however dimly) into the awful knowledge of God Himself, before he can understand any special debt to spiritual pastors and masters and to Godparents. They are to him simple channels of God's Voice and Will: they have

towards him no independent personality, but are ministers and mouthpieces. His natural parents are much more than this: from them secondarily but literally he derives being, inherits nature, assumes flesh: even were the Scriptural "fool" to prove his point (Ps. xiv. 1) filial piety would remain to us as the last holy trace of a vanished something holier even than itself. The rule applicable to the natural and the spiritual body, "first . . . that which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. xv. 46), applies equally as regards humankind to the associated kingdoms of nature and of grace: grace has to be grafted upon, not substituted for, nature. Nevertheless, as a graft supersedes the original stock, so do we observe how that second step which enters into the spiritual world is an advance beyond and above that first step which introduces into the natural world: and thenceforward, our natural duties are discharged by conscious strength of grace, and by no means our spiritual duties by strength of nature. The ascending sequence ends, however, with the

second step: along the advancing years the field of duty widens, and intellectual teachers, temporal rulers, superiors of all sorts and degrees, claim reverence and obedience: but not one of them stands on a level with "ministers of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God," "ambassadors for Christ" (1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 20); or engages our heart with the intact sacredness of father and mother. A wife's paramount duty is indeed to her husband, superseding all other human obligations: yet to assume this duty, free-will has first stepped in with its liability to err; in this connexion woman has to reap as she has sown, be the crop what it may: while in the filial relation all is safe and flawless, for all is of Divine ordaining.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Is. viii. 20). Old fashioned it certainly is to search the Scriptures (*see* Acts xvii. 10–12) for our examples and warnings; but surely the dread of appearing old fashioned is one form of that Disinclination in

which already we have thought to discern a breach of the First Commandment!

Never must we forget that the Inspired Word says not *duty* but "*Love* is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10): as the First Commandment, so also can the Fifth be fulfilled only by love.

Duty to parents includes duty to all men, because we all are brethren: and tracing back to an indisputably real, however remote and unknown, pair of common ancestors, our duty to them cannot be performed except by performing also our duty to their children and children's children for ever. At the outset of the race we clearly recognise such an obligation consequent upon such a tie: Cain's crime was not more obviously an outrage against Abel, whom he murdered, than against Adam and Eve, whose son he destroyed. Again, Joseph, whose filial affection withstood the encroachments of absence, exile, adversity, prosperity, was by that very affection bound hand and foot from taking vengeance on his brethren (Gen. l. 15–21). And by this process of tracking reciprocal duties back to

a common fountain-head we perceive how the obligations of parents towards children, of all superiors to all inferiors, cannot but be included in the brief formula of the Fifth Commandment: something of which train of thought may perhaps be traced in Laban's noble valedictory charge to Jacob (Gen. xxxi. 43–53).

If we ascend a step and trace second sources back to their first source, we behold the same truth built on a yet broader and more impregnable foundation. The Fifth Commandment is swallowed up in the First, for "God is greater than our heart;" and because One is our Father which is in heaven, therefore all we are brethren (*see* St. Matt. xxiii. 8, 9).

It is perhaps easier to quote from the Old Testament history than from the New, examples of relative duties fulfilled; and this not merely because of the copiousness of the former text as compared with the latter, but, possibly, from a deeper and dearer cause. Christ deigns to claim each obedient disciple as His own "brother and sister:" He therefore cannot be less than

such to anyone of us who walk in His ways, and we become privileged to do to Himself what we do to even the least of His and our brethren. The two motives harmonize together and co-operate, yet one supersedes the other; as voices of praise and love soar beyond, and, as it were, silence the accompanying undertone of instruments: and saints are what they are primarily towards "Him Whom their soul loveth," secondarily towards one another; what they do towards men, they do "as to the Lord, and not unto men" (*see* Col. iii. 23). Around that loveliest and closest relation to the Incarnate Son of God, bone of Whose Bone we are, and flesh of Whose Flesh, group themselves all close and lovely human relationships, casting down their crown before Him that was dead and is alive for evermore, and saying: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory."

Thus saintly Elisabeth bursts forth into inspired speech less as exultant mother of the herald than as prophetess of the King (St. Luke i. 41–45). Zacharias apostrophizes his son, but

only while, first and last, praising God for redemption (St. Luke i. 67–79). St. John Baptist makes disciples simply to transfer them to the Mightier than he (St. John i. 15–37). The sons of Zebedee constrained to choose between Christ and their father, choose Christ (St. Mark i. 19, 20). Mary of Bethany, absorbed in Christ, leaves her sister to serve alone (St. Luke x. 38–42). St. Stephen, when the "men, brethren, and fathers" of his nation have rejected Christ, casts them off as "stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears" (Acts vii. 2, 51–53). St. Peter "forgets his own people and his father's house" when he discerns God as "no respecter of persons" in Jesus Christ (Acts x. 34–43). St. Paul's heart may half break under the stress of weeping friends, yet he stands fast in willingness not to suffer only but to die for that dearest Name (Acts xxi. 13).

Turning back, then, to the Old Testament, Abraham stands as the typical Father: a true "Father in God;" for out of God he, like his great-grandson Levi, "knew not his own

children." "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" attests his paternal instinct; yet Ishmael is sent away in obedience to a Divine command: nevertheless, Abraham's prayer has won for him a blessing (Gen. xvii. 18–20, xxi. 9–14). Isaac the "only son," the son whom he loved, is laid upon the altar, even the knife is grasped and stretched forth, all is consummated in will though not in deed, before he lays not his hand upon the lad; but, having worshipped and come again, returns peacefully to dwell in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the promise (Gen. xxii. 1–19; Heb. xi. 9).

We are accustomed in the Old Testament pages at every turn to seek for and revere types of God the Son,—is it so, that we sometimes overlook types as luminous of God the Father? Isaac in his obedience, acquiescence, self-surrender, "brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers," clearly foreshadows Christ. The Father of the faithful (*see* Rom. iv. 3, 11, 12; Gal. iii. 7) dimly, imperfectly,—as all creatures must appear dim

and imperfect when summoned to express their Creator—yet does (if we dare assume so much) equally foreshadow to our enkindled adoration that unutterable Love of God the Father for His lost prodigal, whereof we are certified by the Word of Inspiration, "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (St. John iii. 16, 17). Isaac was appointed for sacrifice, but the longer foresight and surely not the less effort of love, devolved upon Abraham. Yet herein, along with the likeness, comes out the unlikeness of things human to things Divine; the inadequacy of aught temporal to shadow forth that which is eternal; for though Isaac foresaw not, Christ foresaw. The Son, co-Eternal with the Eternal Father, willed and foresaw the cost of man's redemption, and before the beginning ordained the end.

Similarly, a marvellous parable appears trace-

able in the curse and subsequent rebuilding of Jericho: "Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it" (Josh. vi. 26). "... In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Joshua the son of Nun" (1 Kings xvi. 34). The form of Joshua's adjuration, instead of forbidding in so many words the critical act, foretells that whosoever takes it in hand shall pay the penalty, not directly in his own person, but in the person of his sons. The name Hiel may (I am told) signify "God lives," Beth-el "the house of God." A man therefore, whose name is sacred and who derives from a sacred-named city, was he who rebuilt Jericho; Jericho, by ancient interpretation, a figure of the world. Jericho fell prone, not by might of man, but at

the supernatural summons of a trumpet-blast, "at the blasting of the breath of God's displeasure." And yet this same accursed Jericho is the lovely "city of palm trees;" thus, all the more vividly does it represent our own world; earth that now is, a stronghold of sin; earth that shall be, a dwelling-place of righteousness. Hiel rebuilt it (as the passage has been explained) at the cost of a double loss, Abiram his firstborn dying at the outset, Segub his youngest at the completion of the work; these two sons jointly seeming to foreshadow Christ "the First and the Last," "God of God" (Nicene Creed), "the Only Begotten Son in the bosom of the Father," with the Father "before the world was," yet in fulness of time "made of a woman" to whom it was announced "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (St. Luke i. 35). In Christ, as God, is our redemption "founded," for mere man had not sufficed: "He saw that there was

no man . . . therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him" (Isa. lix. 16): "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is precious" (Ps. xlix. 7, 8). Nevertheless, in Christ, as Man made One with God, is our redemption completed: for being made a curse for us He bore our sins in His own Body on the tree, and took out of the way the handwriting of the law that was against us, nailing it to His cross (Gal. iii. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Col. ii. 14). Hence let us learn, not the exceeding love of God the Son only, but likewise the coequal exceeding love of God the Father for us unworthy. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 St. John iv. 9, 10).

Verily, such things as these are of the things too wonderful for us, which we know not.

"Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all" (Prov. xxxi. 29). At the word Ruth seems to rise before us in her exquisite filial devotion, a pure impersonation of daughterly unselfishness. The force of her example appears enhanced rather than abated by the circumstance that a mother-in-law, not a literal mother, was left dependent upon her piety; not a mother endeared by every early recollection, and to whom the original debt of affection can never be repaid; but one acquired in later life as a venerable parent indeed and friend, yet without an instinctive claim upon the heart. Still, we are bound to esteem the tie which united Ruth to Naomi as sacred and stringent in a very high degree, even if not equalling the birth-tie of blood; for our Lord's words long afterwards class variance between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law with variance between parent and child (St. Matt. x. 35). Not one verse here or there, but the whole Book of Ruth should be studied for the portrait of this humble-minded serviceable saint, whose history

illustrates that word of truth, "Before honour is humility" (Prov. xv. 33).

If in Ruth we recognise not a simple forestalment but also a vivid type of that Gentile Church which has been grafted into the sacred stock and inherits the promises, from her attitude of reverent and tender protection towards Naomi, we may deduce a lesson for Christians in general; teaching us how we should behave towards that Jewish race which (however fallen) was yet our elder in the Divine favour, and whose God is truly our God. Christ-like love, sympathy, service, Christ-like prayers and example, may yet perhaps guide and allure into the true holy land some whom our sins have helped to leave stumbling upon dark mountains even while they aspire, or to leave seated hopeless in darkness and the shadow of death.

Joseph who forgave, preserved, enriched his brethren, stands forth at once as the typical Brother (Gen. xxxvii., xlii.–xlv., l.). Along with his pattern we may study that of Moses, when, at Aaron's entreaty, he interceded for Miriam,

although by both he had been offended (Num. xii.); of David, whose soft answer conciliated Eliab's wrath (1 Sam. xvii. 28, 29); and, turning to the New Testament, of St. Andrew when he led St. Peter to Christ (St. John i. 40–42); of Martha and Mary in their sisterly grief, and more especially of Martha, when no longer stumbling at Mary's privilege, she herself summoned her, saying, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee" (St. John xi. 1–3, 17–40).

Abraham, as Lot's Uncle, shows us what courtesy, unselfish considerateness and protective care befit that relationship; though Lot by no means equals him as the ideal nephew (Gen. xiii. 7–12, xiv. 12–16). For an exemplary Aunt, reckless of personal risk, we have Jehosheba; whom we may also regard as a heroically loyal subject, the infant whose life was at stake being by birthright her king as well as her nephew (2 Kings xi. 1–3).

Mordecai and Esther were Cousins, but practically their position became that of father and

daughter (Esther ii. 5–7, 10, 20). In Joab and Amasa, likewise cousins, we find a warning not a model, though the latter incurs no blame (2 Sam. xx. 8–10). From the five daughters of Zelophehad and the husbands they married we may fairly deduce our specimen of cousinly affection and harmony (Num. xxxvi.); yet by no means our example for practical imitation, for even setting aside any spiritual deterrent, repeated experience establishes the general physical inexpediency of marriage between near relations.

Scriptural Husbands and Wives, many and various, invite our study. To begin with Adam and Eve; one is so accustomed to contemplate the Fall as well-nigh simultaneous in both, that perhaps the subsequent Christ-likeness of Adam, presumably in forgiving and cherishing, certainly in retaining, the wife who had cost him life and all things, may pass unnoticed. That Eve responded to his love and patience we need not doubt. Nor need we attempt to settle which (if either) committed the greater sin; Adam's

faithful love (at the very lowest as a probable conjecture) remains in any case. Sarah (vouched for by an Apostle as our wifely model, 1 St. Peter iii. 1–6) illustrates that blemishes must be looked for even in the excellent of the earth (Gen. xviii. 12–15, xx. 16; perhaps also xvi. 6). Deborah startles us both by her official dignity and her personal prominence; for although she is defined as "wife of Lapidoth," after-ages only know of his existence as husband of Deborah (Judges iv. 4, 5). The rule is prominence for the husband, retiredness for the wife; nevertheless, the Source and Author of all rule once emphatically declared, "Many that are first shall be last; and the last first," which authoritative declaration has already even in this world oftentimes been verified. Again: between Manoah and his wife, the wife appears the quicker-sighted in matters spiritual (Judges xiii. 22, 23). Elkanah and Hannah exhibit that mutual paramount affection which befits the conjugal relation. Peninnah, more tried herself, it may be, by being the less beloved wife than was her rival, by being

the childless wife, may remind us how happy are we in the restrictions as well as in the privileges of Christian marriage (1 Sam. i. 1–8). Vashti we may hesitate to condemn. Esther, in her humble reverent demeanour and prayerful policy towards her husband, modern wives would do well to copy. The force of the example is enhanced by (in this instance) the husband's essential inferiority, by no one more inevitably known or more fully understood than by a wife of the still sacred though enslaved race (Esther i. 10–12, iv. 10–17, v. 1–8, vii. 1–4, viii. 3–6).

Jacob, however, of all the Old Testament personages is pre-eminently the representative Husband. His engrossing love for Rachel made toil light to him, delay short, wrongs endurable. Her children became apparently the dearest of his children, her memory remained indelible. He and she exemplify to us that where love reigns any and all faults will be forgiven. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." To form our estimate of Jacob and of his two wives their history should

be studied at large, not from a few scattered references.

Rachel stands for our picture of the triumphant Wife, whose sway over her husband's heart is legitimate and supreme, who knows that thus it is, and who says and does very much as she pleases. Leah "hated," secondary, ever haunted it may well have been and ever humiliated by the fraud to which she owed her position, yet as it would seem loving her alienated husband with inalienable tenderness, and exulting in her sons as so many links attaching him to her, represents another and not rare class of wives. Perhaps Jacob's deliberate and solemn choice of a grave for himself where he "buried Leah" and not beside the cherished dust of unforgotten Rachel, may have arisen if chiefly from knowledge of our Lord's predestined descent from Leah, yet in part from some gratefully affectionate, not to say remorseful feeling, towards the distasteful wife who had lavished her heart on him.

As Priest, despite more than one glaring flaw, we recognise Aaron: most of all at that critical

moment when at Moses' word he "ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed" (Num. xvi. 46–48). For then he threw himself into the path and forefront of destruction, and made himself the shield of his people: thus prefiguring that "High Priest for ever," Who not in will or symbolic act merely, but in very deed and truth gave His life a ransom for many. Far indeed was the flock of Israel, whether in the wilderness or in the promised land, from responding worthily to either their fallible or their Divine Pastor's love; but such lack of service St. Paul long afterwards made up (so far as in him lay) towards the "Shepherd and Bishop" of all souls, when he protested, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus." And so (on the lower level) did Priscilla and Aquila, when for

St. Paul's safety they laid down their own necks (Rom. xvi. 3, 4). We may or may not ever be called to imperil life for religion; but for all times alike, even for the most peaceful and secure, both clergy and people have their standing orders; St. Peter writing in his First General Epistle (v. 1–3): "The elders which are among you I exhort, . . . Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock,"—and St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 12, 13): "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake,"—while in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 17) we read: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."

As King we have David replete with kingly

gifts and virtues, though alas! not exempt from the crimes of kings, from unbridled self-indulgence and pride of power (2 Sam. xi.; 1 Chron. xxi. 1–17): most of all royal perhaps at that moment of agonizing self-reproach when he solemnly invoked Divine vengeance on himself and on his nearest and dearest, rather than let the destroying angel deal death to his people.

At the noble name of Friend we recall Jonathan, more than royal in his disregard of that throne on which he delighted to install one whom he loved with a love wonderful, passing the love of women (1 Sam. xviii. 1–4, xx. 11–17, 41, 42, xxiii. 16–18; 2 Sam. i. 26). Thus centuries later St. John Baptist claimed for himself no title nobler or dearer than that of Friend of the Bridegroom, to hear Whose voice was the fulfilment of his joy (St. John iii. 29). For another aspect of friendship we may study Hiram who was ever a lover of David, and whose intimacy with Solomon led to his assisting in building God's Temple; a marvellous privilege indeed if we must assume (in default of any record

to the contrary) that he lived and died an alien from the commonwealth of Israel (1 Kings v.): so vast a profit may there accrue from a wise friendship. A sadder, yet in the end by no means a discouraging, lesson is taught us by Job and his three friends: for surely these three did genuinely love him, or else they would scarcely have approached him with an outburst of grief, sat down with him in dust, maintained towards him a week-long sympathetic silence; nevertheless rash judgment in the long run spake unadvisedly with its lips, prejudice waxed imperious, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar reviled where at most they should have endeavoured to restore in a spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also should be tempted: yet all is retrieved and hallowed when Job, praying for his friends, is likewise himself accepted and is brought to a latter end better than his beginning (Job, the entire Book). Solomon in his Proverbs celebrates in choice sentences the excellence of friendship: "A friend loveth at all times,"—"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a

brother,"—"Faithful are the wounds of a friend,"—"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend;" and leaves us the precept, "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not." And our Lord Jesus Christ, the "Greater than Solomon," amid many other gracious words spake these: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (St. John xv. 13–15).

David the typical king was not without typical subjects. Such were the three mighty men who broke through the Philistine host and drew water from the well of Bethlehem to slake their monarch's thirst; though whether their zeal was altogether according to knowledge appears questionable from David's subsequent conduct (2 Sam. xxiii. 13–17).

Of the mutual love and kindness which should characterize the relation of Master and Servant we obtain at least a one-sided glimpse in the affection which Naaman's household, beginning from the "little maid" and ending with the retinue in attendance upon his chariot, lavished upon their hasty but (we may reasonably conclude) warm-hearted and kind-hearted master; indeed, the manner in which he received and acted upon his servants' remonstrance suggests a proportionate good feeling on his side; how highly blessed the sequel shows (2 Kings v. 1–19).

Or we may quote an older instance, that of Boaz and his reapers; perhaps representing the position of Employer and Employed as at least partially distinguished from that of master and servant, and exhibiting an intercourse replete with religious dignity and benevolence and the lordly freedom of men essentially equal because all alike "children of the stock of Abraham." "And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you.

And they answered him, The Lord bless thee" (Ruth ii. 3–17).

Now as we found that Disinclination vitiates if it does not nullify any observance of the First Commandment, so I think we may remark that a subordinate species of Distaste will inevitably nullify, or, at the least, vitiate our observance of the Fifth Commandment: I mean DISTASTE for our own relative posture towards any individual contemplated; akin to which is all false shame as to circumstances, position, calling, family, or any other personal concern.

For frequently it is scarcely either positive fault or positive weak point which grates upon us at every turn; let our neighbour undergo the very same trial and we feel at once how lofty and imperturbable a sweetness befits him, and how unreasonable is his resentment of mere passing trifles and matters of taste. But ourselves touched, we wince; we even think well of ourselves if we do not kick and rebel. In fact we do kick and rebel a hundred times under cover of silence, too often of sullen or contemp-

tuous silence. We contemplate our elders and betters not to learn but to criticise,—they speak and we wish they would be quiet; their manners are old fashioned, their taste is barbarous, their opinions are obsolete, their standard is childish, they know nothing available, they do not even aim at knowing any person or any thing worth knowing. We stand habitually in an attitude of endurance or of self-defence, we are censors not children, at best we tolerate what we cannot reform! Bystanders may see ever so clearly that our father's little finger outweighs our whole self, but we see nothing of the sort: "No doubt but we are the people, and wisdom will die with us;" "We are they that ought to speak, who is lord over us?" Intensify and render habitual such Distaste as I am thinking of, and it inevitably breeds its own punishment; it embitters with an utterly futile bitterness the unalterable course of life. No syllable of disrespect may find vent, no form of respect be omitted; but under all forms will burrow an envenomed root of bitterness which must infect and slay the

spiritual life, except it be itself extirpated. Nor is our own day exempt from even an exceptional temptation to this sin of Distaste; for now it is common enough in some ranks for children to be better taught than their parents, and for the young to outrun the old in intellectual exercises; and those who acquire that dangerous thing, a little learning, are more likely to be puffed up by the little they know than ballasted by the much they know not; conceit spurns at reverence and submission, and the undermining of natural piety is too often followed by the repudiation of spiritual loyalty. Alas, if the last step be taken and the final result achieved: "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Rom. i. 28).

To return to our starting point. Spiritual of substance and unlimited of extent, the First Commandment might leave us awe-struck indeed but paralysed, overwhelmed by the demands of Almighty God when set against our inherent helplessness, desperately conscious that He is not

"worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything," and almost ready to reply, "Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His Will? Nay but, O man . . ." Rather let us pray with the Psalmist: "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults;" "Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart: prove me, and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me: and lead me in the way everlasting."

The First Commandment of the Decalogue deals with principle, the Second Commandment with practice. The First binds all creatures without exception, its negative form including even irrational nature in some sort within the pale of its obedience; and was assuredly broken by Satan and his angels when they rebelled, whether or not their spiritual essence exempted them from certain forms of temptation which beset ourselves. The Second Commandment is adapted especially to man as compounded of

soul and body, both of which God claims for His own exclusive homage; to "bow down" is simply a corporeal act; to "worship" (in the sense here indicated and as regards ourselves in this present life) is mainly an act of the will and the intention corporeally expressed; neither act must be addressed to idols; both by implication are constituted our bounden duty and service towards our Maker.

As any direct breach of the Second Commandment consists in part of a bodily act, so we observe that this same commandment confines itself to such temptations as address us through our senses. Descending from the First and Great Commandment to the Second its like,—from these twain to the Decalogue,—from the First and Fifth of the Decalogue which embody the principle, to such consequent commandments as prescribe details,—ever thus descending we narrow and once more narrow the field of discussion while we multiply the points under discussion.

I think we may venture to consider not merely that each infringement of the Second Command-

ment must necessarily (so to say) have its bodily as well as its spiritual characteristic, but that all temptations whatsoever which harass us through our senses and could obtain no access to us at all except through our sensual side,—that all such temptations may be classed as warring against the Second Commandment; and that all and any yielding to such temptations involves a breach of that same Second Commandment. This assumed, the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments appear as correlatives of the Second Commandment.

Allowing thus much, it follows that our breach of the Second Commandment consists in substituting in our affections and homage some thing, any thing for God: and not only this, but in substituting it for Him under that very aspect according to which its created nature has nothing in common with His all-perfect Divine Nature. Very early traces of corrupt religions appear to illustrate this. Underlying their corruptions we recognise man's sense of sin, helplessness, dependence, his clogged aspirations, his

half-blind gropings after light and goodness, his terrors, his desires insatiable unless they find out God. He pleads piteously: "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him." Man burdened by the unbearable burden of self grows wearied in the greatness of his way, his strength and his weakness alike rise in rebellion, he stoops to sensible encouragements and has recourse to vivid symbols, oftentimes at the outset being fully convinced "that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but One." Yet sooner or later the symbol supersedes that which it symbolizes; at first among foolish and ignorant apprehensions; afterwards the wise themselves become taken in their own craftiness; till tribes, races, nations, all go astray together, and speak lies and love and make lies. The Word of Inspiration itself tells us: "God is light," "Our God is a consuming fire," "The Lord is a man of

war;" but that Word is spiritual. Man, on the other hand, is carnal; his unaided meditations debase their object, and his grasp defiles. St. Paul teaches us what were the downward steps of man's career:—"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things" (Rom. i. 18–23).

Such errors avenge themselves. Nature worshipped under divers aspects exacts under each aspect her victims; or rather, man's consciousness of guilt invests her with a punitive energy backed by a will to punish greater than he can bear. We read in the Prophet Micah (vi. 5–8) how Balak, appealing to Balaam, was fain to propitiate "the High God" with burnt offerings, calves of a year old, thousands of rams, ten thousands of rivers of oil; nor with these only, but even with his firstborn for his transgression, the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul. To him the answer was vouchsafed: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

But few were they who found even such a prophet as Balaam to answer them.

Left to themselves, to their own appetites, fears, caprices, imaginations, men made originally capable of discriminating truth from falsehood sought out many inventions. Sun, moon, and stars, from being accounted symbols came

to be rated as gods; rivers were deified; beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles, all were adored: trees waxed oracular, mountain-heads grew sacred, light and darkness engrossed each its representative deity, fire had its own formidable divinity, and the world of the dead its own. Mere attributes, mere operations, became embodiments capable of undergoing invocation and receiving worship; and destruction claimed its horrid ritual of human sacrifice, and fruitfulness was adored with such rites as it is a shame even to speak of.

Each race of mankind seems to have materialized and enshrined its own characteristic tendencies and gifts: so, at least, it strikes a surface observer who does not aim at unravelling possible complications introduced by changes of dynasty or of national preponderance. Egypt loaded the world with massive monuments of long-drawn-out dominion, its gods or deified kings, smooth-faced and passionless, seeming by their colossal scale to express the immeasurable serene remoteness whence they contem-

plated that enslaved herd whose bondage they made cruel, and whose lives they lavished. Centuries and solid earth have disgorged in the human-headed winged Bulls of Nineveh types of all-mastering might. Greece, keen and subtle of intellect, was content to petrify and adore its own birthright-beauty heightened and refined to a superhuman exquisiteness, and constituted the shrine and vehicle of elaborate conceptions. Wisdom, power, arts, sciences, all assumed outward semblances of more or less beauty and dignity; winds, woods, streams, seas, teemed with quaint or lovely inhabitants; the dayspring and the rainbow entertained each its goddess. Rome, when it in turn had superseded all nations as regent of the world, was allured by the supreme intellect and loveliness of fallen Greece to adopt Greek myths and the Greek pantheon in lieu of its own traditional cult; meanwhile by such an apparent cession expressing (it may be) its own paramount claim to appropriate earth and her fulness. According to Roman estimate, the whole world was simply

Rome; Rome and the slaves of Rome made up the entire world.

If thus may be deciphered the broad intention (so to say) of each well-defined group of idols, a further idea suggests itself: because besides the genuinely independent individuality ascribed or appertaining to every god or deified personage, each national family of divinities became unmistakably stamped with the national characteristics of its votaries; therefore every pantheon was in fact and to a great extent a reproduction, exaltation, exaggeration, of its worshippers: man reversed the process of creation, and making gods after his own likeness adored himself in them.

No wonder that breaches of the Second Commandment, heinous according to the Divine standard, are even, according to an elevated human standard, oftentimes base and worthy of abhorrence. No wonder that breaches of the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments (if these may be classed as answering on a lower level to the Second) strike at the root of human

society and tend towards the bringing on of social chaos. The idolater substitutes in his heart and worship something material in lieu of God; and as being material, akin to himself and unlike God: the murderer, the sensualist, the thief, substitutes for his neighbour or for the well-being of that neighbour some personal indulgence or acquisition of his own: each postpones God or man to self.

To ignore God, to obliterate Him (so far as on the contrary remembrance and observance can figuratively be said to retain Him there), to obliterate Him from His own universe by absolute disregard or by distinct denial of His existence, to flee from Him in will, to hate Him; these, and such as these, seem sins against God which correspond with the Sixth Commandment. By means of Elijah's taunting reproof we trace such a defection in Ahaziah King of Israel: "Ahaziah ... sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease ... And he [Elijah] said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Foras-

much as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of His Word?" (2 Kings i. 2, 16). Job (xxi. 14, 15) again describes the wicked as saying ". . . unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?" A step further, and we meet "the fool," saying, "There is no God" (Ps. xiv. 1). Yet again, and we hear our Maker by an inconceivable condescension remonstrate with His people as if hurt by their slights: "But thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured Me with thy sacrifices. . . . Thou hast bought Me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled Me with the fat of thy sacrifices" (Is. xliii. 22–24). Once even we behold a prophet turn his back and make haste to escape from God Omnipresent:

"Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the Presence of the Lord" (Jonah i. 3).

Yet more awful are our Redeemer's own words concerning the rebellious Jews: "Now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (St. John xv. 24); a devilish temper of heart which vented itself in direct active antagonism to the Person of Christ. Throughout His life, and most of all in the compassing of His death (so far as sinners freely though blindly brought about that which the counsel of God had determined before to be done) war was waged between God and man; war which may even be regarded as internecine[1]: on man's side in will, — on God's side in very deed, yet by extirpation of sin and death, not of each death-stricken culprit,—man putting forth his utmost strength to destroy that Eternal Holy One Whom he refused to adore, "Come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance:" whilst on God's side "the Arm of the Lord put

[1] Suggested by a passage in Bishop Milman's, "The Love of the Atonement."

on strength" to make an end of transgression, and by exacting and wringing out every soul's debt of death from the Person of Christ, to make room for the resurrection of dead humankind unto the immortal life of righteousness. That one stronger and subtler than mortal man was wielding him as a tool and weapon, extends the battlefield into "air" and "high places" (*see* Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12), yet without removing it from earth: doubtless as creatures visible raged against the Visible Presence, so meanwhile did creatures invisible wrestle and rage against Him Who is Invisible. Nevertheless, He Who dwelleth in heaven and sitteth above the water-floods and remaineth a King for ever laughed them to scorn; the Lord had and will have them in derision. Thus long before Isaiah (xiv. 12–15) spake by inspiration: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." And thus Ezekiel (xxviii. 2–19) in God's Name foredoomed the Prince of Tyrus: "Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: . . . Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations. . . . They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. . . . Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

. . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness. . . . All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."

Studying our subject we clearly, I think, trace, at any rate in the majority of cases, that man's hatred or negation of his Creator by no means limits itself to pure hatred or simple negation: for the hated he substitutes a something beloved, for the denied a something implicitly or explicitly acknowledged. Such a result is apparently inevitable according to the constitution of his nature: anything may, something must, become to him an object of worship.

With direct hatred of God in His own Person stands connected all worship of Him by acts of hatred and not of love, such as would be any endeavour at the cost of others to propitiate Him towards ourselves: for St. John (1 Ep. iv. 20) argues: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom

he hath not seen?" By such acts the Second and Sixth Commandments are broken together. First we falsify God, substituting for Him a being of our own devising; and this done, we approach the creation of our fear or fancy not otherwise than in accordance with the promptings of our baser self. Sometimes indeed it would seem that into a vacant shrine of man's construction, swept and garnished but devoid of the Real Presence, the personal unclean spirit intrudes himself, and actual devil-worship ensues avowedly or unavowedly.

The meanness as well as the heinousness of sin is illustrated by Adam's apparent effort to shelter himself at the expense of Eve: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. iii. 12). Which primitive instance serves as specimen of that law of sin, diametrically opposed to the Divine law, by which the strong inflict vicarious suffering on the weak. It is the Good Shepherd Who in unapproachable love lays down His life for the sheep: in emulation of Whose pattern

one Apostle prescribes how "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 St. John iii. 16), while another avers: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. xv. 1).

It is, I suppose, a genuine though not a glaring breach of the Second Commandment, when instead of learning the lesson plainly set down for us in Holy Writ we protrude mental feelers in all directions above, beneath, around it, grasping, clinging to every imaginable particular except the main point.

Take the history of the Fall. The question of mortal sin shrinks into the background while we moot such points as the primitive status of the serpent: did he stand somehow upright? did he fly? what did he originally eat? how did he articulate? Or again, man's overwhelming loss ceases to be the chief concern, when at the gate of Paradise our eye lights upon the flaming sword. How about that sword? was it a sword as we understand a sword? was it a blade flashing

and swaying towards each point of the compass, or was it rather a blazing disk to be flung with rotatory motion against the foe? Once more, as to Cain and Abel. An Apostle simplifies Cain's motive for murdering Abel into the bare statement that "his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous:" not so we. What was amiss with Cain's offering? did he substitute inferior for superior produce? did he by his unbloody sacrifice evince disbelief of the Atonement? was his non-acceptance evidenced by the flame not kindling (supposing, that is, his offering to have been made by fire), or by the smoke recoiling upon himself, or how otherwise? what was the mark set upon him? At every turn such questions arise. What was the precise architecture of Noah's Ark? Were the Cherubim of the Tabernacle, of the first Temple, and of the second Temple, of similar or of diverse aspects? Clear up the astronomy of Joshua's miracle. Fix the botany of Jonah's gourd. Must a pedestal be included within the measurement of Nebuchadnezzar's "golden

image"? In the same vein we reach at last the conjecture which I have heard quoted: In which version was the Ethiopian Eunuch studying Isaiah's prophecy when Philip the Deacon met him? "By these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end" (Eccles. xii. 12).

A heart divorced from its Maker breaks the Second Commandment; a divided heart breaks it no less grievously. Perhaps we may even say *more* grievously, when we recall our Master's awful message to the Church of Laodicea: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot" (Rev. iii. 15). Divided allegiance is no true allegiance, as our Lord's words elsewhere recorded certify: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other" (St. Matt. vi. 24). And once more He saith, "He that is not with Me is against Me" (St. Matt. xii. 30).

Of such hollow sort was the service rendered

of old to Almighty God by the heathen colonists of Samaria :—" Then one of the priests . . . taught them how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made. . . . And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord, and served their own gods. . . . . Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord . . . . So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children : as did their fathers, so do they unto this day " (2 Kings xvii. 28–41).

Since not one jot or one tittle shall in any

wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled, we may do well to ponder the individual form assumed by each Commandment, such doubtless being the perfect form wherein to embody the particular precept. In the First Commandment the Alone Lord God speaks to each isolated unit of mankind: "None but Me . . . thou." In the Second each man is still addressed by himself, yet the tone and colour (so to say) of this Commandment is multitudinous: "the third and fourth generation" are imperilled by transgression, mercy descends upon "thousands" through the loving obedience of one. The First is as the firstborn, "the beginning of strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power;" unto man God saith, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;" threats and promises are withholden, while God as King over all demands of man as king over himself the consecration of his entire being. In the Second, God condescends to help forward the obedience He claims: "like as a father pitieth his own children," even so is the Lord God merciful,

and He appeals to that noble human affection which corresponds with His own supreme Fatherliness. "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" (St. Matt. vii. 9). "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" (Is. xlix. 15). Hard indeed must be that heart which cannot be moved "for the children's sake."

It is well and best to be ruled by the highest motive, yet is it not necessarily evil to be influenced by lower considerations. St. Paul speaks of one who "doeth well," even when naming another who "doeth better." In the same context he tells us: "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. vii. 34, 38). These two contrasted figures (the married woman and the virgin) may, I think, be studied as illustrative of the First and Second Commandments.

She whose heart is virginal abides aloft and aloof in spirit. In spirit she oftentimes kneels rather than sits, or prostrates herself more readily than she kneels, associated by love with Seraphim, and echoing and swelling the "Holy, Holy, Holy," of their perpetual adoration. Her spiritual eyes behold the King in His beauty; wherefore she forgets, by comparison, her own people and her father's house. Her Maker is her Husband, endowing her with a name better than of sons and of daughters. His Presence and His right hand are more to her than that fulness of joy and those pleasures which flow from them. For His sake rather than for its own she longs for Paradise; she craves the gold of that land less because it is good than because it is His promised gift to her. She loves Him with all her heart and soul and mind and strength; she is jealous that she cannot love Him more; her desire to love Him outruns her possibility, yet by outrunning enlarges it. She contemplates Him, and abhors herself in dust and ashes. She contemplates Him, and forgets

herself in Him. If she rejoices, it is on spiritual heights, with Blessed Mary magnifying the Lord; if she laments, it is still on spiritual mountain-tops, making with Jephthah's daughter a pure oblation of unflinching self-sacrifice. The air she breathes is too rare and keen for grosser persons; they mark the clouds which involve her feet, but discern not those early and late sunbeams which turn her mists to rainbows and kindle her veiled head to a golden glory. Her heart talks of God; "Seek ye My Face—Thy Face, Lord, will I seek;" until truly her danger in the Day of Judgment would rather seem that she should not have recognised Christ's brethren to whom she ministered, than that she should have overlooked Him in them.

The Wife's case, not in unison with that other, yet makes a gracious harmony with it. She sees not face to face, but as it were in a glass darkly. Every thing, and more than all every person, and most of all the one best beloved person, becomes her mirror wherein she beholds Christ and her shrine wherein she serves Him.

Her vocation is composed of indulgences and privileges as well as duties; yet being her vocation, she religiously fulfils it "as to the Lord, and not unto men." Her earthly love and obedience express to her a mystery; she takes heed to reverence her husband, as seeing Him Who is invisible; her children are the children whom God has given her, the children whom she nurses for God. She sits down in the lowest place, and is thankful there. She is faithful over the few things, and not impatient to rule over the many things; she is faithful in that which is another man's, and can wait patiently for that which is her own. As the Cloudy Pillar deigned indifferently to head the Exodus or to bring up the rear of the children of Israel, so she leads or follows; and is made all things to all her own, if by any means she may save some; while like that sacred Symbol she also veils her perfections from alien eyes, reserving the luminous fire of her gifts and graces to him most of all whose due they are, and in him to the Maker of them both (*see* Ex. xiv. 19, 20).

And we may trace no less clearly the correspondence (if I may call it so) of these two "holy estates" with the First and Second Commandments, by weighing and sifting the characteristic temptation of each vocation: the Virgin tends to become narrow, self-centred; the Wife to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth . . . Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy . . . Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. . . . Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (St. Matt. v. 5–22).

Thus does our Blessed Master in His Sermon

on the Mount by promises incite us to observe the Sixth Commandment, and by threats deter us from its breach. The case of Cain (Gen. iv. 1–16) the second man and (so far as we know) the first murderer appears, in part by contrast and in part by congruity, closely to correspond with this passage.

Cain's anger was unjust, provoked by Abel's righteousness and acceptableness with God as set against his own sin and rejection: and although we know not what conversation passed between them, we may fairly surmise that the enraged elder brother lapsed from bad to worse in speech before proceeding to extremity in act. In his doom two of the Beatitudes quoted above are pointedly forfeited: driven out from the face of the earth, he becomes a fugitive and a vagabond; hidden from the Face of the Lord and going out from His Presence, he is no longer reckoned among God's children, and becomes an occasion of enmity and not of peace. Yet there remains that third Beatitude already referred to; and from this, unless by his own

obstinacy he is not finally excluded, even if those others should continue on this side of the grave irrecoverable. "Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help:" the All-Merciful shows uncovenanted mercy to him who showed no mercy, and so far mitigates Cain's sentence as to insure to him time for repentance.

Anger, Envy, Pride, Lust, Avarice, Gluttony, Sloth. In this ghastly catalogue of the seven deadly sins (arranged in the above order simply for convenience) the last two, except indirectly, are not likely to lead to any flagrant breach of the Sixth Commandment. The first two are notoriously liable to end in such a heinous extreme.

Yet between Anger and Envy there remains an essential distinction. Anger may on occasion be innocent; "Be ye angry, and sin not," says St. Paul (Eph. iv. 26): it may even be virtuous; for we read how once Christ Himself looked round about Him with anger, being grieved for the hardness of men's hearts (St. Mark iii. 5). Envy, on the contrary, never can

be anything but vicious, venomous, abominable. And by general instinct and common consent this distinction seems to be practically recognised: for one person who will plead guilty to envy, hundreds will, I suppose, readily and sometimes lightly own to faults of temper.

The Angry Man is not all anger or always angry. He and his enjoy respites, at times long truces, from their scourge. He is often warm-hearted and affectionate, anxious to make friends again, frank in apology: some specimens of him are even peculiarly amiable when not perturbed. Often moreover his provocation is genuine, although his rage is disproportionate: in a sense he has right on his side at the very moment that he is glaringly in the wrong. His sin appals us when it intensifies into malice or deepens into revenge: it disgusts us when it lapses into crossness or sullenness: it stings us beyond all endurance (except Christian endurance) when it becomes coldly aggravating: it too often lashes others into corresponding fury, or else cows them, when its own fury

approaches frenzy: yet as a threefold cord is not quickly broken, so an honest homely love —I am not now thinking of supernatural Christian love—made up, for instance, of the tie of blood, or friendship, or marriage, long-endeared habit, and personal fondness, will resist the strain put upon it by repeated outbursts of temper; so that Jacob and Rachel (Gen. xxx. 1, 2), Job and his friends, Naaman and his servants, will remain faithful to the end.

Not so the Envious Man. His sin is no mere surface deformity, but rankles deep within: it may never even appear on the surface, but may leave him outwardly attractive as a whited sepulchre or a well-fleeced wolf. Envy has pride for its root; pride not puffed up by endowments too keenly relished, but depressed and soured by grudging consciousness of gifts withheld. Self-exaltation is a poor bubble to aim at, yet Envy aims lower and is content with the abasement of others. Envy revels in spreading an evil report, and yet more perhaps in crediting one. It cheerfully points out the mote

in a brother's eye, but would by no means pull it out. Spots in the sun, thorns to the rose: such are its congenial parables of nature. It can scarcely fail to be hypocritical, knowing itself scorned even by sinners and loathsome even among vices. It tends and it desires to make the victims who fall within its blight miserable: while with absolute certainty and tenfold virulence it makes miserable the wretch whose heart cherishes it. It is like jaundice, discolouring every object; like blood-poison, transmuting life into death: so that the man who does not by grace expel envy from his heart, and hate the very heart spotted by it, must rest content to gaze upon a world of distorted semblance and hideous gloom, and to entertain a creeping dissolution gaining ground within him. Thus in this world: and after this life he may look forward to hell and its society as, at the worst, less excruciating than a new heaven and a new earth wherein, beyond any possibility of two opinions, will dwell righteousness.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst

after righteousness: for they shall be filled. . . . Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. . . . Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. . . . And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (St. Matt. v. 6–30).

Thus, and not otherwise, doth our Master instruct us: He Who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and Who cannot look on iniquity. The Seventh Commandment itself is a perfect specimen of unsuggestive brevity, "Thou shalt not commit adultery:" and though St. Paul here and there writes with unflinching directness of sensual sins, the passages in question would remain bald and cold but for warmth of indignation and passionate zeal for the salvation of souls.

Hence I venture to infer that one legitimate mode of treating our present subject, and it may be not the least profitable mode, is to turn our hearts and thoughts away from it. "Blessed are the pure in heart:" but how shall a heart preserve its purity if once the rein be given to imagination; if vivid pictures be conjured up, and stormy or melting emotions indulged? This, surely, were to commit sin already in the heart, and to act in direct defiance of God Who in this matter hath plainly charged us, and Who, being greater than our heart, knoweth all things. Purity is like snow which a warm contact diminishes if it does not actually sully. Purity is like a bubble, which a touch demolishes, and of which light (never darkness) augments the beauty by play of tints all alike celestial. Purity is like silence, destroyed by discussion. "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Titus i. 15); a warning we do well to keep in view even when studying Holy Scripture itself.

And if that be not mere fancifulness which seeks to trace a parallel between the Second and Seventh Commandments, it seems to follow by parity of reasoning that as regards whatever leads to sensual temptation a rule of avoidance, rather than of self-conquest or even of self-restraint, is a sound and scriptural rule. For the Jews were bidden not to degrade or defile, but absolutely to do away with all idols, and to obliterate every trace of idolatry; not one image might they hoard as a curiosity or an antiquity or a work of art; neither were they encouraged, even if under any circumstances it might be lawful for them, so much as to investigate the subject of heathen rites: "When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places" (Num. xxxiii. 51, 52); "Thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn

their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God" (Deut. vii. 5, 6); "When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination to the Lord, which He hateth, have they done unto their gods" (Deut. xii. 29–31).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 St. John iii. 2, 3). Blessed indeed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. With such a beatitude in view, with so inestimable a gain or loss at stake, with

such a prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus to yearn for, all we forego, or can by any possibility be required to forego, becomes—could we but behold it with purged impartial eyes—becomes as nothing. True, all our lives long we shall be bound to refrain our soul and keep it low: but what then? For the books we now forbear to read, we shall one day be endued with wisdom and knowledge. For the music we will not listen to, we shall join in the song of the redeemed. For the pictures from which we turn, we shall gaze unabashed on the Beatific Vision. For the companionship we shun, we shall be welcomed into angelic society and the communion of triumphant saints. For the amusements we avoid, we shall keep the supreme Jubilee. For the pleasures we miss, we shall abide, and for evermore abide, in the rapture of heaven. It cannot be much of a hardship to dress modestly and at small cost rather than richly and fashionably, if with a vivid conviction we are awaiting the "white robes" of the redeemed. And indeed, this anticipation of pure

and simple white robes for eternal wear may fairly shake belief in the genuine beauty of elaborate showiness even for such clothes as befit us in "the present distress;" Solomon in all his glory was outdone by a lily of the field, and all his glory left him a prey to sensuality: and this launched him into shameless patronage of idol-worship; until the glory of his greatness and the lustre of his gifts, combined with the heinousness of his defection, have remained bequeathed to all ages as an awful warning beacon.

The phraseology of the Old Testament systematically connects idolatry with breaches of the Seventh Commandment. Both subjects should prudently and (at least by many individuals) charily be approached, in deference to the spirit of Moses' enactment: "The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it:

but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing" (Deut. vii. 25, 26).

The Seventh Commandment forbids by analogy, though not verbally, the over-indulgence of any bodily appetite: thus, gluttony and drunkenness range under this Commandment: moreover, experience teaches us that such gross gratifications, and even that wealth, ease, luxury, unchastened by almsgiving and self-denial, predispose frail humankind towards further sensual excesses. The Prophet Jeremiah (v. 7–9) shows us how irreligion and thanklessness are downward steps towards brasen immorality: "How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken Me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

The Prophet Amos (vi. 1–7) portrays a pampered ease-loving community, and foretells their doom: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion . . . Ye that put far away the evil day . . . That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed;" words, which to us of the nineteenth century, and not least to us of England, speak with an awful omen. Surely for us, as for Nebuchadnezzar of old, it is high time to "break off our sins by righteousness, and our iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of our tranquillity." Isaiah (v. 11, 12) no less, that great evangelic prophet, denounces woe on drunkards and revellers

in their disregard of Almighty God: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands."

Sloth, idleness, softness, frivolity, evil in themselves, become by natural sequence purveyors of evils beyond themselves, and are sometimes constituted purveyors also of summary punishment. The fertile plain, well watered to his hand, allured Lot to select Sodom for a home: and, although he himself held fast his righteousness, not one member of his family, so far as we know, escaped scatheless (Gen. xiii. 10–13). Esau, harassed by hunger, bartered for food his irrecoverable birthright (xxv. 29–34). Dinah seems to have been out pleasuring when shame befell her: whence for her sake sin and death overtook others (xxxiv.). Unoccupied Israel abandoned themselves to idolatrous revelry at the very

foot of Mount Sinai, for which misdeed about three thousand men paid the immediate penalty (Ex. xxxii. 1–6, 25–29); and yet again, on their way to the promised land, filled up a pause in the journey by heathen rites and unbridled licence, whereupon the plague broke out among them (Num. xxv. 1–9). By inaction Meroz earned a curse, and Jabesh-gilead destruction (Judges v. 23, xxi. 5, 8–10). Even David, when he despatched his army to battle and himself stayed at home, spared his body but imperilled his soul (2 Sam. xi.). No blame may attach to Amasa, yet the unpunctuality and heedlessness which made him no match for Joab cost him his life (xx. 4–10). Solomon, unlike David his father, enjoyed peace within and peace without the borders of his kingdom: yet his peace became no peace when he misused it to set up false religions, God on His side raising up adversaries against him to avenge the sacrilege (1 Kings xi. 1–8, 14, 23, 26–33). Despite Solomon's special gift of wisdom, which has enriched the intellectual treasury of mankind, despite this

gift and all his early graces, he forgot his own wise sentence "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;" his acts and his doom alike testifying against him.

"Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. . . . Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright" (Prov. xxiii. 2, 31). Yet hunger and thirst we must here perforce both in body and soul, and hope and long with unsatisfied cravings: for only in heaven is it that "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," and that hope itself shall say, "It is enough."

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God." Our bodily needs and infirmities will be sanctified if they become to us a parable of spiritual significance; for they are not even in their own

nature blameworthy while curbed and directed aright. Our own Lord on the last evening of His mortal life said to His Apostles: "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:" and surely in these most sacred words human tenderness and sweet home charities may have spoken, as well as Divine Benevolence touching upon mysteries. At the outset of His Ministry, in His Sermon on the Mount, Christ had authoritatively taught: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . For your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (St. Matt. vi. 31–33): whence we know to a certainty that "these things" are good, the others better.

And while Christ bids us hunger and thirst after righteousness, let us not forget that He Himself is that Righteousness for which He bids us crave, "The Lord our Righteousness."

He gives Himself to loving souls in the Sacrament of His most Blessed Body and Blood: for "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper" (Catechism). His Flesh is meat indeed, and His Blood is drink indeed; for whoso eateth His Flesh and drinketh His Blood hath eternal life, and Christ will raise him up at the last day (St. John vi. 54, 55). "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Our Lord said, "This do" (1 Cor. xi. 23–25): and *therefore* (it might almost seem) the mass of hearers do it not. For of old when God said, "Ye shall not eat of it" (Gen. ii. 16, 17, iii. 3), and when as yet there existed but two human beings in all, those two ate, being more apt to die than are many of us to live. A speaking serpent baited his trap, and beguiling one credulous soul infected all mankind with death: it is only our God with Whom so many care not to break bread, and Who can aver: "All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rom. x. 21); "Ye will not

come to Me, that ye might have life" (St. John v. 40). And it may have been in pointed foresight of so prevalent a distaste for the Blessed Sacrament, that he who said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," received for answer from our gracious Master the Parable of the Great Supper (St. Luke xiv. 15–24): wherein the invited guests so readily postpone the Supper to different earthly objects, and incur the sentence, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper." And what was it they chose? But one thing surely, and that thing death: for glancing beyond their present to their future we discern as it were a little parable ensconced within the great parable; whereby the first recusant's estate turns out no more than a grave; and the second recusant's oxen —his day being done and his work left undone— are proved for the last time by dragging him to a tomb; and the third recusant finds hidden under his bride's veil a veiled death likewise.

"From contempt of Thy word and commandment, Good Lord, deliver us."

The Eighth Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," stands last in order of those three which I am venturing to treat of as corresponding with the Second: and equally, I think, does it stand last both in interest and, so far as its breaches are concerned, in heinousness. For here we are limited to the bare deed: that deep-seated temper, which may or may not break out into such a deed, we recognise under the Tenth Commandment. Human interest centres on what a man is, rather than on what he has or even on what he does. It is the man himself whom anger, malice, revenge transform into a very devil; whom self-indulgence bestializes and brutalizes. But theft seems less ingrained in the offender: the criminal maintains (so to say) an existence separate from the crime. Solomon finds on occasion a degree of palliation for the thief, even while denouncing him: "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; but if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house" (Prov. vi.

30, 31). And St. Paul views him hopefully, holding out to him an instant reward on reformation: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. iv. 28). And if this crime is (in a certain sense) external to the culprit, much more is it external as regards the victim who suffers not in person but in property: and whether or not the fact can be readily accounted for, it is (as I have before remarked) those crimes which coming straight from heart and soul evidence what the man himself *is* which most of all move our own heart and soul whether by righteous repulsion or morbid attraction. Ingenuity of thieving may charm a depraved intellect, but no aspect of theft will stir even corrupt man to his deepest depths. The history of Job becomes a sort of allegory to impress upon us such truths: Satan might strip him of all that he had "skin after skin"[1] down to the bareness of actual birth,

[1] I have seen this reading suggested.

yet through all the Patriarch abode serene and intact; it was not till the permitted hand touched his actual self that the tug of war commenced, the life and death struggle between good and evil.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.... Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (St. Matt. v. 3, 42).

This Beatitude invites Christians to take a spiritual step in advance of wise Agur: he prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (Prov. xxx. 8, 9); we are encouraged to love poverty whether we be rich or poor[1]. He feared lest riches should breed in him presumption; poverty, dishonesty; either extreme, irreligion: we, who are bound to aim at and attain a standard of righteousness above that of the Scribes and Pharisees, are stirred up to prefer poverty to opulence. Wherefore? Surely at least in part

[1] For this application see Bishop Moberly's sermon on the First Beatitude, where, claiming for it a far wider range, he yet includes within its scope both literal poverty and a pious love of poverty.

for simple love of our dear Lord, Who being rich, for our sakes became poor, and Who deigned as Man to earn that kingdom of Heaven which belonged to Him inalienably as God. And when by grace we are enabled to share His temper, by free gift and at once we are constituted sharers of His reward. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Most of the Beatitudes stand over to a future day. One after another they are formulated "shall be . . . shall inherit . . . shall obtain . . . shall see:" but the poor in spirit and the persecuted for righteousness' sake have this in common, "their's *is* the kingdom of heaven." As our Lord says elsewhere: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: . . . for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (St. Luke xvii. 20, 21).

But if "not with observation," is it therefore no kingdom at all, merely a kingdom by courtesy and a well-sounding figure of speech? Nay, on the contrary, it is the sole kingdom reigned over by man; for he who is not Christ's

freeman is Satan's slave, and the master not the slave possesses all things. The heart which is one with Christ shares His dominion, first over itself and afterwards over all else. He whose Head reigns, himself reigns: he whose Representative is king, is himself royal. Nor does such an one lack guard and retinue, for the Angels, excellent in strength, are God's servants who do His pleasure; and that gracious pleasure ordains them ministering spirits, and sends them forth to minister for the heirs of salvation.

This kingdom, then, which is our own if we adhere to that elect company whom the first Beatitude pronounces blessed (for the qualification for the eighth Beatitude is not here in question), is clearly one without temporal pomp, or parade, or homage. "My son, give Me thine heart," says to each of us our Heavenly Father; and man freely giving his heart therewith transfers his whole treasure to heaven, for his heart and his treasure abide inseparable (*see* St. Matt. vi. 19–21). The heart once divorced from earth,

the things of earth dwindle to pettiness; we possess our souls in patience, and await that day when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Meanwhile luxuries enhance the ensnaring influence of the world, and therefore almsgiving is eagerly substituted for luxury: personal comforts are like locked-up capital bearing no interest; and therefore they who desire at the last Day of Reckoning to receive their own with usury pare down comforts, clipping off one here, another there, according as vividness of faith, hope, love, urge them in the direction of selling all, and spending themselves and being spent in obedience to the Divine precept already quoted: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

But what we may lawfully clip, pare, stint, is our own provision; the unique person whom we have a right to grind is ourself. A munificent giver must not be a fraudulent acquirer, or here niggardly and there lavish; or open-handed in response to calls upon generosity,

while lax or evasive when justice puts in a claim. Even unselfish persons, if they permit themselves to be generous at the cost of justice, substitute the kind of luxury they relish for another kind which they care not for: generosity is *their* luxury; yet if incompatible with justice it must be foregone. Charities in debt exhibit a dubious side as well as an edifying one; and if charities, how much more the common run of debtors.

From the noble desire to give, springs that apparently alien and by comparison mean virtue, Economy: for no revenues, however vast, can be administered to advantage while sapped by waste. Economy is oftentimes a shamefaced virtue; more prone to blush when to keep clear of dishonesty poverty practises it by constraint, than when ample means are voluntarily husbanded for the sake of some unselfish purpose. On the contrary, when economy lapses into stinginess it frequently parades itself with brasen effrontery, visibly hugging itself and despising its betters.

The sordid Economist walks the world unabashed, and says her say complacently in company. She keenly realises and relishes the distinction between elevenpence three farthings and one shilling, and ignoring all claims of neighbourhood, however struggling and meritorious the neighbour, frequents remote shops in honour of this distinction. Her remarks turn on prices, and linger in the store-room or the coal-cellar. She gossips about the extravagance of this dinner-giver, and the wastefulness of that household, frittering away her own and her neighbour's time, not to speak of her neighbour's patience. To save a halfpenny she will squander time recklessly, that priceless, irrecoverable treasure time. Her tastes, aims, contemplations, standard, are of the earth, earthy.

The heavenly-minded Economist reflects how when our Lord bade "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost" (St. John vi. 5–13), it was after feeding a multitude to the full; therefore fragments become precious to her for her own consumption, because thus she

can succour the larger number of her brethren, and yet more, because thus she imitates Christ. "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness;" and this by no means grudgingly or of necessity, but by free-will of love, enabling herself the more abundantly to stretch out her hand to the poor, yea, both hands to the needy. Her diet approaches the dinner of herbs with love: her own dress is plainer than the letter of the apostolic injunction prescribes, "not with gold, or pearls, or costly array;" yet may she find scarlet for her household, wine for her friends (*see* St. John ii. 1–11), or if not wine, at least a cup of cold water sweetened by sympathy. Meanwhile she tests her ways by the sentence of Solomon: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty" (Prov. xi. 24): wherefore if ever the balance trembles doubtfully between gift and thrift, her glad preference weights the scale of gift and sends thrift flying upward. All the same, she wastes

nothing; nothing either literally or figuratively on inferior bags, insecure property, or perishable goods (*see* St. Luke xii. 32–34). She "considers" a field before buying it, and counts the cost before beginning to build Church or Hospital, or (far behind these) her own house (*see* St. Luke xiv. 28–30).

If Dishonesty is uninteresting among vices, so it would seem is Honesty among virtues. Even religious people appear at a pinch hazy as to its requirements. I remember an instance of (as I believe) such an individual remonstrating on a receipt stamp being defaced in accordance with the law,—"Better drop the penny into the Offertory." Surely not, when it was due to the Government. Another, whose standing was I think of the same sort, kept one more dog than he paid duty upon. Such practices are explicable enough among the *ordinary* class of respectable people, but among the *extraordinary* one might hope for a stricter rule. Yet no; Church goers and Bible readers may be found who seem never to have observed that plain

text, "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom" (Rom. xiii. 7). On the other hand, I recollect once reading of an exemplary Christian woman who used to transmit to some Government department an annual sum as conscience-money for infringements of law.

But small marvel is it that men rob one another, when the majority of mankind rob God. Hear the inspired message delivered by Malachi (iii. 8–10) to ancient Israel: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Or again, hear the word of the Lord by Haggai (i. 3–7): "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and

this house lie waste? . . . Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways."

God in His mercy grant that we of England may penitently consider and amend our ways: for though our private and our national sins may not correspond point for point with these awful passages, yet is our spirit too much as the Jews' spirit, and our guilt as their guilt; and who shall say that our national honour, wealth, credit, already impaired, do not show the beginning of our chastisement, and (unless we repent) the beginning of the end? "Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea? . . . Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity" (Nahum iii. 8–10). Were

it ever so tiresome "to be true and just in all our dealings" (Catechism), two things we should remember: first, that we are nowhere exempted from scrupulous fulfilment of "tiresome" duties; secondly, that to a host of unenterprising kind-hearted persons in easy circumstances the Eighth Commandment would practically become a dead letter, but for precisely those minute obligations which they find irksome.

From deeds we now pass on to words: from the Second Commandment, with its three parallels, to the Third with its one special parallel.

"Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh His Name in vain."

The wording of this Commandment suggests that unenlightened man would probably hold himself guiltless, or at least lightly absolved, in matters of mere speech. Even saintly Job (vi. 25, 26) raises a suspicion in this direction, "How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove? Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is

desperate, which are as wind?" Isaiah (xxix. 20, 21) indeed, is empowered to record a Divine consolatory promise, which touches on this subject of words: "... All that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word ..."

Yet, on the whole, the testimony of Holy Scripture is (I think) clearly and preponderantly on the contrary side.

Christ, in His own great High Priestly prayer on the eve of His Passion, speaks thus: "I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world ... Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy Name ... And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (St. John xvii. 6–26). The first petition of the prayer He teaches us is, "Hallowed be Thy Name." The beginning of our spiritual life is by Baptism "in

the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" whereof we may trace a dim announcement long before in Solomon's proverb, "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." The Name of God is as inseparable from His Person as is His Presence; to insult, to slight His Name or His Presence, is to insult, to slight His Very Self. And this St. Paul implies in his Epistle to the Galatians (iii. 27): "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," making no distinction between our adoption into the Name and our union with the Person (*see also* 1 Cor. vi. 11, 15).

Under the Levitical law blasphemy ranked as a capital offence (Lev. xxiv. 15, 16); false oaths were forbidden (xix. 12); religious vows became binding (Num. xxx. 2). In harmony with which is the Preacher's exhortation, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. . . . When thou vowest a vow

unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (Eccles. v. 2, 4, 5).

Our Lord, in His Sermon on the Mount, enforces and enlarges our obligations: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the Great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (St. Matt. v. 33–37). And on another occasion He pronounced a Woe on the Scribes and Pharisees for sin in this very matter: "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever

shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the Throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon" (St. Matt. xxiii. 16–22).

These passages, besides condemning prevaricating oaths and (at the very least) oaths on trivial occasions, open our eyes to the dignity of creation in general, and consequently to the reverence which should pervade and check our speech. For not only "heaven" and "Jerusalem;" "earth" also and our own "head" must not be lightly invoked. In every creature is latent a memorial of its Creator. Throughout

and by means of creation God challenges each of us, "Hath not My hand made all these things?" Our prevalent tone of mind should resemble that of the Psalmist when he proclaimed: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork;" saying elsewhere in the same vein, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man . . .?" Nay, more, we should exercise that far higher privilege which appertains to Christians, of having "the mind of Christ;" and then the two worlds, visible and invisible, will become familiar to us even as they were to Him (if reverently we may say so), as double against each other; and on occasion sparrow and lily will recall God's Providence, seed His Word, earthly bread the Bread of Heaven, a plough the danger of drawing back; to fill a bason and take a towel will preach a sermon on self-abasement; boat, fishing-net, flock or fold of sheep, each will convey an allusion; wind, water, fire, the sun, a star, a vine, a door, a lamb, will

shadow forth mysteries. Versed in such trains of thought the mind becomes reverential, composed, grave; the heart imbued with such associations becomes steadied and ennobled; and out of the abundance of such a heart the mouth impulsively speaks that which is good and edifying; not corrupt communications, or foolish talking and jesting which are not convenient, or idle words whereof an account will have to be given. A Christian is one whose smooth fair outer surface of manner covers and reveals a transparent depth of character, and whose hidden man of the heart is fairer than are any outward features; he puts away childish things, and that foolishness which is bound up in the heart of a child; he keeps his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile, and because he is privileged to name the Name of Christ he departs from iniquity.

What is it literally to take God's Name, any name, "in vain"? I suppose the primary meaning of the phrase points to indifferentism at least as obviously as to antagonism. "In vain"

suggests not irreverence merely, but voidness, nothingness, the bringing in for no cause but to round a sentence or fill up a gap, that Name which was proclaimed before Moses in Majesty and Mercy (Ex. xxxiv. 4–8); to utter simply for the sake of saying something, that Name which Isaiah (xxx. 27) foresaw as coming from far burning with Divine anger. It is to pronounce the Name as though it were a mere word, not standing for any person; to bring It in where another word would actually serve our purpose as well; to speak as though God Omnipresent were one of those "vanities of the Gentiles," those "nothings in the world" (*see* 1 Cor. viii. 4) which have ears and hear not. Nevertheless "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?" To swear deceitfully may be more heinous, but to swear idly is almost more foolish: just as to exchange a soul for the whole world, would be a less absurd transaction than to throw one away gratuitously.

For good or for evil oaths and vows stand recorded; He alone Whose sacred Name has

been invoked has power to loose from their yoke, and absolve from their guilt, if guilt there be (*consider* Lev. xxvii.; Num. xxx.; Deut. xxiii. 21–23; Mal. i. 14). Abraham's pious servant may have borne this in mind when taking his precaution accordingly (Gen. xxiv. 1–9); so also the spies in their covenant with Rahab (Josh. ii. 12–21). The Lord's Name proved an impregnable tower even to the foredoomed obnoxious Gibeonites (ix. 14–21). Jephthah might rend his clothes and bemoan himself, yet discern no way to recall his vow (Judges xi. 30–40). Jabesh-gilead disregarded the oath of Israel, and paid the penalty (xxi. 5–11). Shimei tampered with his oath and forfeited life (1 Kings ii. 36–46). Zedekiah ruined himself and his kingdom when he despised the oath and covenant established between himself and a heathen monarch (2 Chron. xxxvi. 11–13; Ezek. xvii. 11–21). Herod's festive oath was bad to take and worse to keep (St. Mark vi. 16–28). Worst of all perhaps on account of its deliberate purpose, yet (it may be) less reprehensible if taken "ignorantly in

unbelief," was that oath of more than forty Jews who bound themselves under a curse to kill St. Paul (Acts xxiii. 12–21).

All these, good and bad alike, were distinct oaths with some distinct aim. Yet more contemptible even if less odious than the latter sort, is such random cursing and swearing as does not truly mean half it says, often does not mean anything at all. It may be worse to curse with Shimei's rancour than with St. Peter's cowardly collapse (St. Mark xiv. 71), but base and to be abhorred are both courses! And though in cursing and swearing, be the words malicious or dastardly, or simply careless and disproportionate, God's most holy Name be not always directly vilified; yet, underlying all profane speech is the idea of His Power, or His Judgment, or His adversary, or in some guise or other of Himself. Thus all profane speech, including light or unmeaning blessings, and exclamatory invocations, falls under the ban of the Third Commandment.

It may excite in us a godly fear to offend if

we ponder the Divine conception of an oath as revealed to us in the Epistle to the Hebrews (vi. 17, 18): "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation;" and, again, if we realise the correspondence between sin and sentence: "As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually" (Ps. cix. 17–19).

Our Lord hath said: "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (St. Matt. xii. 36, 37). This by itself suffices for our warning and

guidance. Yet since all Holy Scriptures were given for our learning, we do well to study each subject throughout the Bible; the Book of Proverbs in particular abounds with inspired wisdom on graces and on sins of the tongue; and Jeremiah (xxiii. 9–40), and Ezekiel (xxxiii. 30–33), warn us against misuse of words either spoken or heard.

To misrepresent God Almighty either as to His essence or His character, constitutes a breach of the Third Commandment; it is to call by His Name a something other than Himself; and thus calling, to prefer it to Him. And as right and wrong are and cannot but be as He views them, and there is no right except whatever harmonises with His Will, and no wrong except whatever offends it, therefore to put evil for good and good for evil in deference to any defective standard (be it one of our own erecting, or of the whole world's) transgresses the same Commandment. Even Job (xxxii. 2) erred in this matter, for we read that "he justified himself rather than God;" how much more

the Slothful Servant in the parable, when he defended his conduct on prudential grounds, saying: "I feared thee, because thou art an austere man" (St. Luke xix. 20–23). So likewise, though after a different manner, did those men whom Jeremiah (vi. 14) accuses: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace;" and those prophetesses of Israel whom, in the Name of God, Ezekiel (xiii. 17–23) upbraids: "With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life."

What then shall we do with this awful Name of the Lord? "... for He is an Holy God; He is a Jealous God; He will not forgive," said Joshua to the children of Israel, "your transgressions nor your sins;" neither can we any more than they become as the heathen (*see* Ezek. xx. 32, 33). If we live according to the prayer our Lord has taught us we shall be safe:

"Hallowed be Thy Name." We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father: wherefore, copying our Lord and Brother we become bold humbly to repeat His words, "Father, glorify Thy Name." And because it pleaseth God the Father to be glorified in and through God the Son (St. John xiii. 31, 32; 1 St. Pet. iv. 11), they who pay homage to the supreme Name of Jesus (Phil. ii. 9–11), when gathered together in that Name know that He Himself is in the midst of them (St. Matt. xviii. 20) and will do what they ask in His Name (St. John xiv. 13, 14). In His Name they perform acceptable acts of charity (St. Mark ix. 38–41). For His Name's sake they suffer and labour and are hated (*see* Acts ix. 16; Rev. ii. 2, 3; St. Matt. x. 22), and are ready, if need arise, to be bound or to die (*see* Acts xxi. 13); working with inexhaustible patience in the field of their own heart, in the field of the Church, in the field of the whole world, and praying always that God will bring to pass His gracious word: "From the

rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering: for My Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. i. 11).

Prayer, including all devotional exercises, is pre-eminently a keeping of the Third Commandment, a hallowing of the sacred Name of God, a duty which is one of our chief privileges, a privilege which is no less than our bounden duty. Such assuredly the primitive Christians held it to be. Thus certain early persecuted Christians are designated as those who called on the Name of Christ (Acts ix. 14, 20, 21). St. Paul salutes the Corinthian converts as "called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's" (1 Cor. i. 1, 2). In the Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 15) we are directed to offer by Christ "the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name." In the Book of Revelation (xv. 2–4) the Church

triumphant stands and sings: "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art Holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest."

As the Third Commandment regulates speech in Divine matters, so does the Ninth in human matters: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." A marked correspondence is, I think, traceable between them.

The essence of these two is similar, at least in very great part: but the breach of either produces in one main point widely different results. Hard speeches against God which ungodly sinners have spoken bring judgment upon the speakers; but Him they touch not (St. Jude 14, 15); as David triumphantly sings: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,

against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision" (Ps. ii. 1–4),—or, as inspired Isaiah revealed to King Hezekiah: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: this is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against Whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel .... Because thy rage against Me, and thy tumult, is come up into Mine ears, therefore will I put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest" (Is. xxxvii. 21–29).

On the contrary, words find man so vulnerable as in great measure to lie at their mercy:

they may distil as dew, or, on the other hand, bite like adders or pierce like swords.

The serpent by flattering speech beguiled Eve, and through her ruined mankind (Gen. iii.). Babel was founded with a boast which the confusion of tongues turned to folly (xi. 1–9). Rebekah's fond exclamation "Upon me be thy curse, my son" was powerless to shield Jacob from the temporal retribution which overtook him for following her advice (xxvii.). The unadvised words of Moses, uttered as it would seem in a moment of faithless impatience, excluded him from the promised land (Num. xx. 1–13; Ps. cvi. 32, 33). The men of Ephraim threatened and sneered at Jephthah and his Gileadites, who having overcome them detected some of their fugitives by a mispronunciation and slew them (Judges xii. 1–6). Delilah's treacherous urgency wrung from Samson the avowal which destroyed him (xvi. 15–21). Eli's feeble remonstrance neither cleared his own soul from responsibility nor saved his sons (1 Sam. ii. 22–34, iv. 3–11). The words of a popular

song set Saul rancorously against David (xviii. 6–9). Nabal's churlish answer would have cost him and his dear, but for Abigail's tact: even as it was, he died (xxv. 4–38). Absalom by insidious speeches stole the hearts of the men of Israel, yet in the long run his own life paid the forfeit (2 Sam. xv. 1–6, xviii. 6–15). Besotted counsel and an arrogant answer dethroned Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 1–19). The Man of God from Judah was slain by his fellow prophet's lie (xiii. 7–26). Naboth and his sons perished by false witness, but were avenged on the bodies of two kings (xxi. 1–19, xxii. 37, 38; 2 Kings ix. 21–26). Greed and lies secured leprosy for Gehazi and his heirs (2 Kings v. 20–27). A certain cavilling lord was shown the truth, but at cost of his life (vii. 1, 2, 17–20). The impious accusers of Daniel themselves fell into the pit prepared for him (Dan. vi. 4–24). Haman's murderous slander recoiled on himself, his ten sons, and the people they dwelt among (Esther iii. 8–11, vii., ix. 1–16).

Still, what the Ninth Commandment ex-

pressly forbids is false witness; and by no means all the above instances, however reprehensible on other grounds, or disastrous in their results, are tainted by verbal falsehood. Yet are they one and all in a measure false, inasmuch as they are spoken (so to say) from a false point of view; so that what influence they exert tends in the direction of error and not of truth.

Not to dwell on the very obvious instances:—the builders of Babel laid their plans as if man could both propose and dispose; Rebekah volunteered a guarantee she lacked power to make good; Moses omitted that witness to God's Perfection which he owed both to God and man; Ephraim's vain threats were confuted by defeat, and by a sort of irony a mispronounced word helped to cut off the fugitives; Samson's fond weakness set up a false comparative standard between things earthly and heavenly, as though a woman's importunity could outweigh a Divine command; Eli by not exerting his High-Priestly or Judicial prerogative to coerce and punish, gave the lie to his own words of rebuke;

"Saul's thousands and David's ten thousands," though (I suppose) a blameless instance, may yet serve to impress upon us the danger of exaggeration; Nabal's railing words were unjust as well as ungenerous; king and counsellors alike mistook and misstated the relative strength of throne and nation, when Rehoboam defied his subjects; Daniel's accusers behaved as if God Almighty were of less account than an earthly monarch, as, indeed, they had already done when inducing Darius to frame his impious decree.

False witness, even in a strict sense, may moreover be borne by conduct or silence as emphatically as by words. All men at all moments cannot but be witnesses for or against the Right, which is another name for the Truth; and they are so to the inevitable and incalculable help or hindrance of their neighbour. Whence it follows that daily life even without one word spoken may set at nought the Ninth Commandment as genuinely as any defamatory oration or perjured oath or skulking slander.

On the last morning of His most holy life our

Lord declared to Pilate: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice" (St. John xviii. 37). But surely this Divine witness was borne by all Christ did, refrained from, suffered, no less forcibly than by every word that proceeded out of His Mouth. His reply to St. John Baptist was actually couched in deeds, not words: "John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus saying, Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another? . . . And in the same hour He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind He gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me" (St. Luke vii. 19–23). To St. Thomas He said: "I

am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. . . . If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also" (St. John xiv. 6, 7): indicating that not by His words or acts exclusively, but also by what He *was*, He bore witness to the Father.

As is the Master, so should be the disciples. St. Paul, discoursing of the Blessed Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, instructs first his Corinthian converts, and through them ourselves: "As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." Addressing in his Epistle to the Romans the outward (as opposed to the inward) Jew, the same Apostle says: "Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you:"—an appeal which recalls to our mind the guilt and the death-doom of those Ten Spies who brought back an evil report of Canaan, and the long-drawn penalty inflicted on the generation misled by their false witness.

St. Peter exhorts a widespread body of Christians: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ;" thus intimating no difference between the testimony of words and of conduct. And St. Paul, in his valedictory charge to the Ephesian Elders which culminates in that solemn protest: "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men," appeals not to his preaching only as having taught them the counsel of God, but along with this to his daily practical example as having instructed them in the duties of their calling (Acts xx. 17–35).

Passing on from these and such as these, we (if reverently we may) are bold to adopt our Master's own solemn words and to say: We have greater witness than these. For Christ Himself has bidden us: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

heaven" (St. Matt. v. 16). Works, we infer, preach at least as powerfully as words; and this form of sermon all can deliver, even those who have neither call nor eloquence as teachers. Yet many modes there are of transgressing this Divine precept; many modes of transgressing while only one of keeping it. We may make our light so shine as that men shall glorify ourselves. Or our light may be intellectual luminosity but spiritual darkness, how great darkness! or mere human warmth and brightness, little better than the lustre of a glow-worm; or a fascinating brilliancy, no safer guide than a will-o'-the-wisp dancing on a quagmire, or a wrecker's beacon-blaze luring to destruction. Light, heat, and life do naturally keep company; nevertheless there is a phosphorescence which indicates death and corruption, even as holy Job certifies us that there is a land whose light is as darkness.

Our possibilities, our responsibilities, seem to enlarge and multiply while we study this momentous subject of personal influence. "Whether

one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness."

The New Testament, by repeated examples and reiterated injunctions or warnings, impresses on us the all-importance of truth, and of true witness in its widest sense. Even righteous Zacharias was punished for scepticism by a suspension of the faculty of speech, yet his sceptical enquiry reached the ear of none but an angel whom it could not contaminate (St. Luke i. 5, 6, 18–20). King Herod's baffled hypocrisy illustrates the impotence of man's decree when set against God's (St. Matt. ii. 8–12). The Temptation in the Wilderness unmasks the father of lies quoting the Bible in support of falsehood (iv. 3–7). On the other hand, St. John Baptist is "a burning and a shining light" of truthfulness: let us rejoice in his light, kindling thence an emulous flame in ourselves (St. John

i. 19–27). A guilty conscience distorted facts to Herod the Tetrarch: whence by contrast we draw an illustration of the gracious promise that whoso doeth God's Will shall likewise know of the doctrine whether it be of God (St. Matt. xiv. 1, 2; St. John vii. 17). Of Judas Iscariot, steeped in hypocrisy, or (as some think) grown faithless through baulked hope, four speeches are recorded, before his one despairing witness to the truth followed up by suicide: he veiled greed under pretence of charity (St. John xii. 4–6): he volunteered to deliver into the hands of His enemies that Master with Whom meanwhile he went in and out as companion and familiar friend: he asked, "Master, is it I?" when already he had made a covenant with death and was at agreement with hell: he concerted a sign with his confederates, and then with "words smoother than butter" saluted his Lord, sealing all with a kiss (St. Matt. xxvi. 14–16, 25, 48, 49; St. Mark xiv. 44, 45).

And onwards through the night of the most holy Passion and the day of the Cross, lie suc-

ceeded lie, while the Very Truth kept rarely broken silence, yea, even from good words. St. Peter repudiated his dearest convictions, false witnesses invented or misapplied evidence, the High Priest blasphemed God's own utterance calling it blasphemy, the Sanhedrim adjudged the Life to be guilty of death, the Chief Priests denied that they had any king but Cæsar, Pilate washed his hands while he befouled his soul. Almost the last sound of human speech that (so far as we can suppose) reached our Redeemer's dying ears was a misinterpretation: "Behold, He calleth Elias."

Alas that even after the descent of God the Holy Ghost upon the Church, Ananias and Sapphira chose death rather than life, involving themselves in the falsehood which slew them (Acts v. 1–10). Yet as to government of the tongue, guileless conduct, and the involuntary witness borne by daily life, even they may not have been fully warned and instructed as we ourselves are; for the New Testament was not in their hands. Which of *us* can plead ignorance?

"Let love be without dissimulation" (Rom. xii. 9).

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. . . . Charity vaunteth not itself" (1 Cor. xiii. 1, 4).

"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (xiv. 8).

"Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (2 Cor. x. 18).

"If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. . . . Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 3, 7).

"That we . . . speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ. . . . Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another" (Eph. iv. 14–25).

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man" (Col. iii. 9, 10).

"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (iv. 6).

"The law is not made for a righteous man, but . . . for liars, for perjured persons" (1 Tim. i. 9, 10).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy" (iv. 1, 2).

"Put them in mind . . . to speak evil of no man" (Titus iii. 1, 2).

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (St. James i. 26).

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, . . . speaketh evil of the law. . . . Now ye rejoice in your

boastings: all such rejoicing is evil" (iv. 11, 16).

"Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word" (1 St. Peter ii. 1, 2).

"He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. . . . Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" (1 St. John ii. 4, 22).

"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (iii. 18).

"The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. . . . The holy Jerusalem . . . there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" (Rev. xxi. 8–27).

"Blessed are they that do His command-

ments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. xxii. 14, 15).

(Study also 2 Thess. ii.; St. James iii.)

Again. If from Adam downwards every single person ever born still exists maintaining unbroken by death one continuity of individual existence from birth to this moment, from this moment to the Day of Judgment, when we all must stand face to face not with our Judge only but equally with each other, then is it no light offence to traduce the dead, to blacken recklessly their memory, to cultivate no tenderness for them, helpless and inoffensive as they now lie with all their sins of omission or commission on their heads. Party feeling, whether called religious zeal or national antagonism or political creed, becomes simple malice and is simply devilish when it leads us not only to condemn opponents (or it may even be those merely to

whom we ourselves are opposed) but to wish that they may really be as unworthy as history or rumour makes them, to court and hug and blaze abroad every tittle of evidence which tells against them, to turn a dull ear and lukewarm heart to everything which tells in their favour. "Charity . . . rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." It is a solemn thing to write history. I feel it a solemn thing to write conjectural sketches of Scripture characters; filling up outlines as I fancy, but cannot be certain, may possibly have been the case; making one figure stand for this virtue and another for that vice, attributing motives and colouring conduct. Yet I hope my mistakes will be forgiven me, while I do most earnestly desire every one of my personages to be in truth superior to my sketch.

"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: lest the Lord see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him" (Prov. xxiv. 17, 18). This proverb suggests a hint on the

charitable use or uncharitable misuse of Holy Writ. They who being of their father the devil are prompt to do his lusts, may deduce from it a caution by no means to exult over a prostrate foe, lest the Lord see "it"—that is, as they interpret the text, see their exultation, and it displease Him, and to their keen disappointment He forthwith exchange chastisement for mercy.

Those who "sanctify the Lord God in their hearts" draw a far different lesson from the same sentence. Bearing in mind that "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men," their aim is to be merciful as their Father in heaven is merciful, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. The patience of Job, and much more the Passion of Jesus, prove that the embrace of Divine favour may hold fast those whom mysterious Providences are sifting and scourging: wherefore our wise Bible students, in heart at least if they cannot in outward demonstration, make haste to agree with an adversary while opportunity offers; and look forward to

beholding him forgiven, reinstated, blessed beyond his former prosperity with a latter end better than his beginning. Which felicitous consummation they hasten by prayer and delight themselves with in prospect, feeling how that day must be a festival whereon it shall be said to any soul: "In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer . . . O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted . . . In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee" (Is. liv. 8–14).

Yet argue as we will, the tendency to dwell upon and talk of our neighbour's faults remains inherent in human nature. No cause this for despair. As haste of temper may be ennobled into quickness of righteous indignation, or as a lax propensity to fondness may be spiritualized into all-embracing Christian sympathy, so may a critical and censorious habit become amiable

if turned into the deep silent channel of intercessory prayer. Which course St. James (v. 16–20) inspirits us all to adopt: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much . . . Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." I once heard it suggested in a sermon how far better it would be to admonish an offender to his face than to vilify him behind his back: a salutary rule of conduct conveying in the particular instance an allusion easy to be understood by the congregation. Still, in many cases rebuke is not lawful any more than gossip is edifying: in every possible case intercessory prayer is permissible, expedient, laudable. Thus St. Paul writes in his First Epistle to Timothy (ii. 1): "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for

all men." Elsewhere he bids the Ephesian Christians stand fully armed, but with superhuman armour and weapons, "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. vi. 13–18).

Blessed, if only they correspond to their blessing, are those for whom many intercede. Blessed without exception are the intercessors themselves. Weariness, apathy, repugnance, so often a dead weight on prayer, are perhaps more readily routed by intercession than by any other form of devotion. Through perseverance in intercession cold hearts grow warm, narrow hearts expand, selfish persons wax sympathetic; soon they embark in self-denial; at length they mount (it may be) to the lofty standard of self-sacrifice. And no marvel: for every earnest intercessor, however imperfect he may be, copies Christ the Great Intercessor, and is moved by that Holy Spirit Who dwelling in us intercedes with groanings unutterable.

At length, completing the circle of God's

revealed Will and man's consequent duty, we reach the Fourth Commandment; and with this I trust to find the Tenth Commandment in correspondence. Well, I think, may we speak of the "circle" of both Will and duty; the Fourth and Tenth Commandments lead us back to the starting-point of a holiness spiritual and, so to say, immaterial; our strength will in great measure be to sit still; or as Moses bade Israel in all the haste of the Exodus, to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will show to us "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 18).

The circle, emblem of eternity, in old-established art often figures as a serpent biting its tail. Happy shall we be if we bring to bear the wisdom of serpents (St. Matt. x. 16) on our study of eternity; and of that circle of the Divine Will into which the circle of human obedience fits with such absolute accuracy as to leave no discrepancy between the twain, if only the lesser be perfectly

rounded. These are to each other as the First Great and Second Like Commandments are also to each other, distinguishable while indivisible; as the outer and inner edge of a wheel-tire revolving in indissoluble union, yet of which one moving along its vaster orbit with a dominant sweep encompasses and entails the other.

"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day... In it thou shalt do no manner of work... For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

God inhabiteth eternity, man time. God wills to constitute man a sharer of His eternity, and in preparation He graciously invites man to devote to Him a section of time.

This Fourth Commandment, in which the Table of man's duty to God culminates, serves as a test commandment, probing the heart, and, as it were, enquiring with a Divine voice: "Is thine heart right, as My heart is with thy heart?" The others are moral, this positive.

The others commend themselves to our own sense of fitness; this challenges less our intelligent assent than our obedience. For on the face of things we apprehend not why neither more nor less than one seventh of our time should be the portion claimed; to enthusiastic devotion the charge might seem too small, to earthly prudence too great. To either the answer is simple and final: "To obey is better than sacrifice."

He and he alone who sits loose to the world can keep this precept: for it requires him to labour, "six days shalt thou labour," as imperatively as it commands him to rest; yet so to labour that his rest be not trenched upon, so to rest that his work be resumed on the instant. Solemn Feasts had their silver trumpet call, workdays their rousing cockcrow.

During six days man must be diligent in the works of his calling; on the seventh he must empty not hands only but heart likewise of temporal business. His work must be worked, his rest rested, not according to impulse but

according to rule; otherwise into the Divine scheme of universal harmony he will intrude a discord, as of those children of whom we read, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." Through going out of time he will practically wander out of tune; his labour will be spent for that which satisfieth not, his incense will become an abomination and his oblations vain.

In this critical point of duty our Creator deigns Himself to become our Pattern: and as the Commandment dates not from the Redemption but from the Creation of the world, so does the Example.

If we would at last rest as God rested, let us study first to work as He worked; for doubtless the Mosaic record is by condescension of Inspiration couched in such language as, while enlarging our knowledge, ought—reverently be it said!—to incite us to imitation. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Studying then the First Chapter of Genesis we notice that each day had its own appointed work, which work was commenced and completed within clearly assigned limits; each had a completed work to show when "evening and morning" had made up the particular day. The product of each day "was good;" of this we are certified because, though the second day's work remains uncharacterized for the moment, the summing up of the whole is "Behold, it was very good." Good work achieved leads up naturally to holy rest.

If thus we in turn would work and afterwards would rest, we too must adapt each occupation to fill and not to exceed its allotted hour; and this not in a vague desultory sequence, but overruled by one matured and sustained life-purpose. As St. Paul bids us: "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhor-

tation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness" (Rom. xii. 6–8). In the above list no frivolous occupations appear; a suggestive omission.

Not that monotony and gloom beseem us; with good will we must do service (*see* Eph. vi. 5–8), and the ancient Preacher concedes to us a wide range of avocations and interests: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a

time of war, and a time of peace" (Eccles. iii. 1–8). A slavish observance of "days, and months, and times, and years," was a reproach and no praise to the Galatians (iv. 9–11). I was greatly struck by an anecdote I read long ago and loosely recall, how a Bishop and his guests were at recreation after dinner, the Bishop playing at chess, the guests conversing; when amongst them the question arose: "If we knew that our Lord would return to judgment within this hour, then how would we occupy ourselves?" One would betake himself (say) to confession or prayer, another to almsdeeds, and so forth; but when appealed to the Bishop replied simply, "I should play my game at chess;" insinuating that to be found occupied in the duty of the moment, although in such a duty as needful recreation, was to be found prepared.

Even if our day be but of very small things let us not despise it; rather let us strenuously perform our day's task within its limit, bearing in mind our Lord's own sacred words uttered concerning Himself and for our emulation:

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." So shall we never cry out in anguish and all too late: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." All the world over each day is one and the self-same day of which the twenty-four hours have to be filled up by every human being for himself according to his bounden duty, be he great or small, learned or ignorant; and one by one all days are leading us up to that "great and dreadful day of the Lord," wherein the retrospect of life will (in great measure) reduce itself to "Inasmuch as ye have done it .... Inasmuch as ye did it not ...." "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. v. 15, 16), for we are forewarned that sooner or later there shall be time no longer. Meanwhile eternity hangs on time.

Perhaps more generally distasteful than the command to work, is the command to rest: at first sight a monstrous proposition, yet not so

when sifted. For man calls work, or at any rate absorbing occupation, what God calls evil work or else idleness; thus man may be accounting himself a worker, at the very same moment that God's judgment overhangs him as at the best a cumberer of the ground. Even good done at an unlawful time becomes, so far, evil: as we see illustrated of old. It is good to set store by God's gifts: but not to hoard them perversely, as certain Israelites reserving manna until the morning found worms and corruption (Ex. xvi. 19, 20). It is good to confront and fight God's enemies: but not after the unalterable word ominous of overthrow has been pronounced, "Go not up, for the Lord is not among you" (Num. xiv. 40–45).

Men of pleasure and men of business who during six days have neither interest nor occupation in common, harmonize on the seventh day so far as to repudiate the intolerable burden of its hallowed rest. Some other style of rest they will adopt, but by no means that style. They will lie late, or go holidaying, or doze in

pew or armchair, or smoke. The idler will idle on. The drudge will (sometimes, not always) indulge in the unwonted luxury of idleness. Such "rest" deserves not the name of rest, when tried by the sacred standard of God's Fourth Commandment.

Toil, not repose, is fallen man's birthright: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Repose has a solemn, in a sense an unnatural side to it. Our ordinary night's rest breaking off work for the time being, rehearses that rest in the grave which will break off our work finally. And as each night's sleep prefigures the sleep of death, so does each hallowed day of repose prefigure the eternal repose of heaven. But which of us in the sweet familiar aspect of sleep loves to discern a dim foreshadowing of the veiled face of death? Alas, our fondness for rest too often stops short at "sleep and slumber and folding of hands to sleep;" and a relish of physical enjoyment or relaxation is no help at all towards any longing after heaven; and therefore is equally no help towards a

welcoming of the hallowed day of rest which prefigures heaven, or of the unknown sleep of death which precedes heaven.

"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day." This unique verbal form suggests that our liability to transgress the command is increased by a danger of its slipping our memory. Not that the day itself is likely to elude observation: on the contrary, temporal affairs are in Christian lands regulated and modified in reference to its recurrence. But we must not merely start in the morning under a conviction that Sunday is Sunday: we must bear the circumstance in mind all day long, doing or not doing in intentional subordination to that dominant circumstance, or else we shall not hallow the hallowed day. Wandering thoughts and a wandering heart desecrate it. Heart and thoughts must be concentrated and consecrated in loving, conscious, sustained observance of that day which we are bound not to call merely, but thankfully to esteem "a delight, honourable."

This brief devotional rest on earth typifies, then, the eternal rest in heaven: concerning which perfect rest we are warned, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it .... Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. iv. 1, 11). Neither the one nor the other can be attained or enjoyed at hap-hazard; we must "remember," "fear," "labour,"—the object aimed at is worth a life-long discipline.

Yet to rest cannot surely be any such arduous undertaking: we rest by instinct and by inevitable collapse of exhausted powers. True: and such rest is innocent, but is not necessarily the hallowed rest imposed upon us. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest," applies to all that nature, even at its purest, can achieve unaided by grace.

No practical importance seems to attach to the question of which day should be hallowed, whether the seventh or the first: this has been

settled for us ages ago by Catholic consent. Nor, I think, need we here burrow among distinctions which exist—and assuredly do exist between Jewish Sabbaths and Christian Sundays. The essence of this Fourth Commandment lies deeper than any and every difference between Jewish strictness and Christian liberty: it underlies both, and both at their best express it worthily. Only we Christians are beyond all others bound to keep in view that a vexatious petty scrupulousness forms no part of our Sunday duty, while works of mercy are never more holy than on that holy day (*see* St. Matt. xii. 1–13). As "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,"—as our dear Master's own meat was not that which His disciples proffered Him, but rather was to do the Will of Him that sent Him and to finish His work (St. John iv. 31–34),—so our hallowed rest is promoted and not violated by services of love done in the love of God to our brethren.

"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath

Day . . . . In it thou shalt do no manner of work." And why? Because, as already dwelt upon, "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

This reason for consecrating a Sabbath holding good from the foundation of the world, is quite independent of the added emphasis with which the same Festival was enforced at the period of the Exodus.

Presumably those only who work heartily and well are those who will even feel predisposed to rest heartily and well. For—if without irreverence we may append words and thoughts of our own to the inspired record—"God . . . rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made," because then looking back, "God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. ii. 2, i. 31).

Two sorts of persons appear, by inference, likely to transgress the Fourth Commandment: the Idler and the Money-grubber.

The Idler has a standing quarrel with time. Punctuality would be his bugbear if he did not ignore it. He likes indeed, in a certain sense, to bestir himself: he may become a busybody, yet notwithstanding all his occupations, little or nothing will he have to show at the close of day. Sometimes he wastes time frankly by doing nothing, sometimes by misappropriating to a favourite avocation the period due to another he relishes less. He is systematically behindhand, and would be perpetually running after his work in the vain endeavour to overtake it, if only he ever would either run or work. He is not likely to be an early riser: the day which should commence at eight, dawns not perhaps before ten. Half-a-dozen desultory acts and interests wile away the first hour or two; his vessel buoyant, because without ballast, gets (so to say) underweigh towards noon. But time and tide alike wait for no man, and the occupation our Idler is commencing is the very one he ought then to be leaving off. He has not leisure to be thorough, neither has he energy

to be prompt. Whether his lot be to labour for a livelihood, or—not less awful—simply so to labour that at the final reckoning his day's work may pass muster, he falls short of both the earthly and the heavenly standard, and his wages are contempt from earth and from heaven. He who will not exercise so much self-discipline as to map out his six days with tolerable accuracy, is the last man to draw an unswerving line of sacred demarcation around the seventh day. His mind is lax; his habits are unstable as water, dribbling out in this direction, overflowing in that, running short somewhere. It is out of the question that once a week he should gird himself to worship with zeal, to teach the ignorant with perseverance, to shut his mental door peremptorily against the lounging concourse of every-day interests which keep it on the jar, or even to rest throughout and not beyond the enjoined period of rest. Six consecutive days enervate him, and the seventh cannot brace him mechanically as clocks are wound up once a week; in fact, if he resembles

any clock (and few may those clocks be which resemble him!) it is one with a light-weight pendulum, fussing along in an unmeaning hurry, and marking no particular time; or one which proceeds by jerks, and stops irrespective of the solar system. Everywhere and always, whether or not they drop into Church, Idlers and Pleasure-seekers, as such, are conspicuously indisposed towards observing a set day of religious retiredness: cares of this life may not choke their souls, but riches and pleasures do. Even the woman—let alone the man—"that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

The Money-grubber repudiates Sunday from far different motives. Six days are all too brief for his engrossing toils; the seventh day cannot be sacrificed to a mere imaginative punctilio. It may not answer to outrage popular opinion; so in some places (alas! not in all, even in Christendom) shops, counting-houses, business quarters in general, are closely shuttered during one day in seven, outsides are whited over and garnished, while within ledgers

and such like unfold fascinating pages. Or if not literally thus, if importunate decency transports our Money-grubber into his pew on Sunday morning, then before his mental eyes ledgers and their kin flaunt themselves, where neighbours only discern Bibles, Prayer-books, Hymn-books, on the desk. His bales of goods, cattle, hay-ricks, would be no more out of place in Church than is he himself; his money-bag would occupy a seat as worthily; they would put full as much heart into their attendance, and full as much spirituality. Indeed, in one sense they are present, he is absent; for he carries them in his heart into the holy place, while yet all the time his heart tarries outside among them.

Now what command could God Almighty have framed for man's good alway, that should neither be "rest" nor "labour"? There is, perhaps, nothing which brings more irresistibly home to conscience the alienation of the human from the Divine Will than this law of a day of religious rest. We make ourselves like those of old:

"Thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift" (Isa. xxx. 15, 16). And such a doom is incurred rather than comply with terms which ensure safety and prosperity!—"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. lviii. 13, 14).

Time (like life) is a talent bestowed on the whole human race without respect of persons. Time is a part of eternity. Eternity did not

break off when time began, to recommence when time finishes; on the contrary, time is not so much as simultaneous with eternity; it is but a defined period of that boundless whole, as air within a bubble is simply a portion of that same atmosphere wherein the bubble floats.

Wherefore, if lawfully we may use such words, and well might we hesitate, for "shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood"—yet (if we dare so speak) to eject God from His own appropriated day is to eject Him, so far as in us lies, from His own eternity; for He and none but He is that "High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity;" and in such proportion as our littleness bears when set in battle array against His Greatness, we by so doing do to our utmost displace Him from His everlasting abode; we make ourselves so far like Antichrist "that man of sin . . . the son of perdition; who op-

poseth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4).

Here in our train of thought the Fourth Commandment joins itself on to the First: these two touch, as it were, and become locked together, completing that perfect circle of God's revealed Will which establishes man's range of obligation. For it has already appeared (at least, I hope so) that our major circle of duty towards God involves our minor circle of duty towards man, as inevitably and inextricably as the outer edge of a wheel entails its own close parallel the inner.

And as the Fourth and First, so are the Tenth and Fifth Commandments complementary of each other in a special sense, and beyond what applies to the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, or Ninth. The Fifth enjoins, the Tenth forbids. Both regulate not actions explicitly, but tempers, motives, dispositions. A breach of the Fifth Commandment need not indeed entail any breach of

the Tenth; but the former is violated perforce by infringement of the latter.

And further. The First and Fifth Commandments standing parallel to each other, we infer that the Fourth and Tenth will likewise stand parallel. Whereupon we expect to find that the Tenth Commandment, like the Fourth, will serve as the searching test-commandment of its own Table.

What is covetousness? It is a desire of personal advantage, but is not necessarily any abstract wish for our neighbour's damage: spite for its own sake is characteristic of envy. Selfishness is the root of both sins: but envy is allied through hatred to murder; covetousness through lack of love to rapine. Envy tends to destroy an individual rankled against; covetousness to supplant a neighbour whether or not he be obnoxious.

Contentment is, perhaps, among virtues the one most of all opposed to covetousness, preoccupying the ground it would lodge upon, and exhausting the atmosphere it would breathe.

At first sight one might expect liberality or generosity to be *the* antagonistic excellence: on the contrary, these may even incline the heart to greed, though of a sort which grasps mainly for the sake of lavishing the more abundantly. But contentment is that infallible antidote we seek: nothing of any kind can be coveted, which is not so much as imagined preferable to what is already in possession. Contentment mirrors Omnipotence, inasmuch as it wills whatever is. The pious contented soul is an image of God Almighty, Whose Will no creature resisteth (*see* Rom. ix. 14–24), and more especially of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who rejoiced in Spirit when He said: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth . . . even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (St. Luke x. 21).

The objects we are not to covet arrange themselves under two heads: first, what our neighbour is; secondly, what he has.

For by "house" I think we may fairly understand, not merely any tangible house of bricks and mortar, but also that position in the king-

dom of nature or of grace, or in the subordinate conventional kingdom of society, which our neighbour fills. One man inherits a throne and authority, another is a born leader of men, on another love is lavished; another enjoys riches, or knowledge, or pleasure, or intellect, or genius; one is favoured by his circumstances, another by his friends; on some individuals even lofty spiritual endowments are freely poured out. May we not then lawfully covet these good gifts and such as these? St. Paul himself bids us "covet earnestly the best gifts," alluding to a class which, however good, did still not amount to spiritual graces (1 Cor. xii. 27–31). But these gifts, as St. Paul contemplates them, were stored in the overflowing treasury of Providence, and were not already assigned to individuals. "Covet to prophesy," he says again, which words recall how, centuries before, Moses, pre-eminent among prophets, had coveted for the whole people of God a supply of his own gift by largess of the Divine Spirit (Num. xi. 24–29). To open our mouths ever so wide, craving to have them filled,

is not to covet wrongfully unless the special morsel we desire belongs to another. Neither can we, speaking accurately, covet such appurtenances of our neighbour as in their very nature are not transferable; for the sake of these we may envy him, but to render covetousness possible his loss must not be simply his loss, but must be contemplated as in some shape or other the condition of our own gain.

That covetousness does strictly involve the idea of superseding, supplanting an owner, as well as of appropriating goods, can (if I mistake not) be illustrated by the following passages from prophecy, which, moreover, bring out the wide meaning of the word "house,"—"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it" (Hab. ii. 9–11). "Woe unto them that join house to

house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! In mine ears said the Lord of hosts, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant" (Is. v. 8, 9). Here the penalty foretold is not that the encroacher shall himself become houseless and homeless, but that his house shall remain vacant of its tenant: and connecting this circumstance with the standard of retribution set up under the Jewish Dispensation, "... Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Ex. xxi. 23–25), and with the special enactment against a detected false witness, "Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother" (Deut. xix. 19), we infer that the deadly venom of covetousness lurks not in simple desire of acquisition, but in willingness or callousness as to dispossessing another.

If we may view the house as in fact representing the personal standing,—that is, to all intents

and purposes the actual personality of our neighbour, we the more readily conceive why "house" stands foremost in the prohibitive list. St. Paul, in his Christ-like zeal for souls, shows us how to desire *yours* is very short of desiring *you* (*see* 2 Cor. xii. 14); covetousness, by a sort of reverse-parody of heavenly-mindedness, is so to desire that which another possesses as to become recklessly indifferent in regard to the lawful owner.

At which point comes to light a parallel between the Fourth and Tenth Commandments. Both are observed by such self-mastery as defers to the prior claim, be it of God or man, on somewhat which otherwise we might innocently have wished to appropriate and enjoy; both are violated by rebellious disregard of that claim, however our conduct may outwardly shape itself. And the Sabbath-breaker (to use the old term) who dispossesses Almighty God of that day which forming a portion of time forms no less a portion of eternity His habitation (Is. lvii. 15) corresponds with the covetous man whose evil will would fain supplant his brother man.

If from sin we may turn to "everlasting righteousness" for an illustration (like, in a sense, in its diametrical unlikeness), which of us does not feel the utter supplanting and abolition of that offender on whom the just sentence is pronounced: "I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand" (Is. xxii. 20, 21)? Or, again, listen to St. Peter quoting a Psalm concerning Judas Iscariot: "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take" (Acts i. 20).

Although "wife" follows "house" in the Tenth Commandment, we must first of all view her as included equally and indivisibly with her husband in that neighbour whom we must not desire to supplant. The precept is constructed explicitly for men, implicitly for women; were it not so, to covet a neighbour's *husband* would become defensible! Thus obviously she ranks with the man himself, being constituted equally

with him an informing presence of a forbidden house. Besides this she takes her place as first, nearest, dearest, most precious, and altogether unique among his possessions: as indeed he ranks among hers. Without ignoring either aspect I think we may feel safe in dwelling chiefly upon the former, when we recollect that marriage expresses to us Christ's ineffable union with His Church, and that Holy Scripture contains such blessed words as these: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His Name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness .... In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the Name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord

our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, xxxiii. 15, 16). Such a second self we must not covet: "what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

It heightens our conception of this blessed absolute unity to observe that as concerns the wife the Fourth Commandment is otherwise framed. There no separate mention of her occurs; she is wholly at one with her husband, her duties and privileges bound up in his duties and privileges, her self in his self. Thus does their Maker graciously regard them as one, enact laws for them, bless them: throughout the Decalogue the single mention of her occurs with exclusive reference to men, not to God; or, if we add to this the mention of both father and mother in the Fifth Commandment, it is still with reference to man. Yet I suppose that certain points are included in the second clause of the Tenth Commandment which remain alien to the drift of the Seventh; for a given wife might be coveted for her connexions, or fortune, or serviceableness, or skill, or influence; this

would indeed be to covet her, but as it were at one remove, as property rather than as a wife; it would not be that "lusting after her" which in spirit breaks the Seventh Commandment.

Looking back for a moment at what the Tenth Commandment seems to indicate as the wife's position, we observe that the clause which forbids coveting the house is repeated word for word on behalf of the wife; not so, as regards aught else specified; whence she appears to stand as connecting link, akin to both, between what the man is and what he has; even as Christ's sacred Humanity, bridging over the severing gulf, unites the Godhead to the Church.

The son and daughter, enumerated in the Fourth Commandment, are omitted from the Tenth; perhaps because they cannot as literal progeny be coveted, although their parents may be envied. The stranger moreover here finds no place; it may be on the ground that hospitality goes not characteristically with covetousness.

Servant and maid follow, alike in both Commandments; the Fourth vindicates their essential

equality of person and rights; the Tenth implies their accidental and temporary inferiority, all the more marked among a slave-holding community. On a lower level appear the cattle; their dues being distinctly guarded by the Fourth, their serviceableness taken for granted in the Fourth as well as in the Tenth.

Last of all, no foothold is left for covetousness by that all-inclusive summing up "nor any thing that is his."

Covetousness, as we have observed, exhibits no necessary connexion with either love or hatred of our fellows; but consists with simple indifference towards them as readily as with a shallow liking unworthy to be called love, or even as with hatred. St. Paul, when excluding the covetous man from the Kingdom of Christ and of God, qualifies him as an idolater (Eph. v. 5): and such we perceive him to be,—one who postpones all to self by a sordid species of self-worship. Yet more urgently and peremptorily are we warned by the express words of Him Who knew what was in man: "Take heed, and

beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (St. Luke xii. 15); which Divine words suggest our multiform risk; how covetousness is easily fallen into, easily overlooked, perhaps when detected easily condoned.

"God is love:" wherefore he who loves is so far God-like. God being Love—for Love is His Essence, the groundwork and core (so to say) of all His Attributes—can self-evidently neither be nor do aught incompatible with love. We who tremble before some of His declared Attributes, and thrilled with awe watch the stream of time develope all He does and all He permits, lack faculties whereby to understand the harmony between His love and His hatred, His gift of life and His doom of death. We are fain to contemplate this profound mystery with the humility and certainty, if not with the insight, of that inspired Preacher who stated concerning a minor matter: "Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

God, then, in condescension to human frailty and human understanding is pleased to reveal not His love alone, but His hatred also:—"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. vi. 16–19). Divine hatred cannot be at variance with that love which is the Divine Essence. Hatred, on occasion, yes: but no word anywhere do we read of God's *indifference* to His creatures. Indifference is utterly alien to Him, has neither part nor lot in His Nature, is neither root nor shoot nor fruit of His Will, is foreign to heaven; and if it be foreign to hell also, in its abominable isolation it remains exclusively of the earth, earthy.

Indifference, then, is the proper soil of covetousness, which need not be malicious but must be more or less callous. And herein, I think,

resides its efficacy as test-commandment of the Second Table. '*Self*-love is a natural healthy constituent of human nature, not reprehensible at all unless—as, alas! it is very likely to become—disproportioned and domineering. What standard of *neighbourly* love does the Bible itself set up? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" it demands no more, and this it is which St. Paul enlarges upon and enforces:—"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law . . . Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 8–10). The vicious form of self-love is selfishness: but this may be refined, ennobled, sanctified, spiritualized, until it becomes no grosser sentiment than that which made the Apostle of the Gentiles all things to all men that by all means he might save some; which made him count all things loss if so he might win Christ.

Nevertheless, as regards love it is possible to deceive oneself; mistaking flights of fancy, or an

emotional temperament, or constitutional good nature, for that "one thing needful:" a ruinous self-deception, to unmask which no anguish or humiliation were too keen. Then as the touch-stone detects base metal, covetousness or envy tracked home to the heart reveals the hollow sham. For these two evil tempers are alike in presenting no good side, and in being incapable of reform: for both of them the sole remedy is extirpation. Neither the good seed nor the good soil accounts for these, "an enemy hath done this;" if these "fell by the wayside, the fowls of the air" would be far too wary to devour them. Covetousness is and must abide incompatible with any love worthy of the name. If consciously and deliberately we would fain supplant our neighbour in small matters, so (presumably and granted the temptation) would we in great: if in that which he has, so also in that which he is. And thus does our secondary circle of duty become fully rounded: the Tenth Commandment tests and certifies our fulfilment of the Fifth Commandment.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" (St. Luke xvi. 10–12). Let us not say of a tinge or a suspicion of covetousness, "Is it not a little one?" and be saved by a mere hair-breadth if we be saved at all. Rather, once more—for already I have quoted them in a different context—let us din into our hearts and consciences those words of Moses to the Israelites when he warned them against the covetable aspect of idols: "The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like

it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing."

And now since one example is worth a world of precepts, let us briefly contemplate the winning Perfection of our dear Lord: Who while going in and out among his fellow-men condescended to fulfil before their eyes and in their ears the Law of Love; making Himself, as it were, God's Epistle written in our very hearts, known and read of all Christians to all generations.

The following little Harmony was in part if not wholly suggested to me.

A Harmony on Part of 1 Corinthians XIII.

Charity.	*Jesus Christ.*
Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.	The Lord said to His disciples: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (St. John xvi. 12).

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long,

and is kind;

Christ thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but humbled Himself, and became obedient unto the death of the Cross for our sakes (Phil. ii. 6–8; Heb. ii. 9).

Christ poured out His Soul unto death, bearing the sin of many: He shall see of the travail of His Soul, and shall be satisfied. Though He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich (Is. liii. 11, 12; 2 Cor. viii. 9).

The Lord said on the night of His Passion: "Suffer ye thus far" (St. Luke xxii. 51).

Christ healed the ear of Malchus (St. Luke xxii. 51; St. John xviii. 10).

charity envieth not;	The Lord said: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (St. John xiv. 12).
charity vaunteth not itself,	The Lord said: "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" (St. Luke xii. 14. *See also* His answer to Pilate, St. John xviii. 37).
is not puffed up,	He said moreover: "I am meek and lowly in heart" (St. Matt. xi. 29).
Doth not behave itself unseemly,	The child Jesus went down with His mother and His reputed father "and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them" (St. Luke ii. 51).
seeketh not her own,	In His Agony our Redeemer prayed, saying: "Not my Will, but Thine, be done" (St. Luke xxii. 42).
is not easily provoked,	The Lord answered

him that smote Him: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?" (St. John xviii. 23).

thinketh no evil;

"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (St. John ix. 3).

Rejoiceth not in iniquity,

The Lord being grieved for the hardness of men's hearts, looked around Him with anger in the Synagogue (St. Mark iii. 5).

but rejoiceth in the truth;

"Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (St. Luke x. 21).

but the greatest of these is charity.

might be sanctified through the truth" (ver. 19).

"I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (ver. 26).

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